ORPHAN ISLAND

BOOKS BY

ROSE MACAULAY

ORPHAN ISLAND

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

MYSTERY AT GENEVA

DANGEROUS AGES

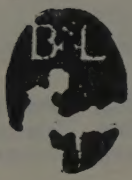
POTTERISM

ORPHAN ISLAND

BY

ROSE MACAULAY

AUTHOR OF "TOLD BY AN IDIOT," ETC.



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"On the surface at last a flat islet is spied,
And shingle and sand are heaped up by the tide;
Seeds brought by the breezes take root, and erewhile
Man makes him a home on the insect-built pile!"

ANN TAYLOR.

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ORPHAN ISLAND

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CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNING OF IT

I

Miss Charlotte Smith, a kind-hearted lady of thirty or so, set forth in the year 1855 to conduct some fifty orphans, of various nationalities and all of them under ten years of age, from East London to San Francisco, where an orphanage had been provided for them by a wealthy philanthropist, who was so right-minded as to desire to use in this manner some of the riches he had obtained in the Californian gold rush of six years before. They went in a large steamship, provided also by the philanthropist, much of it being fitted out as a crèche, with such arrangements for the entertainment, restraint, and otherwise rendering as peaceable and innocuous as might be, of infant orphans, as occurred to thoughtful and philanthropic minds in the middle years of the nineteenth century. There were a number of little walled pens for the more juvenile orphans, in which they sat and disported themselves with bricks, rattles, dolls, balls, wooden animals, and the other harmless objects suitable to their tender years; there were shelves stocked with books for the young which it was hoped that the elder

orphans might be induced to peruse; there were basins everywhere, of which it was hoped such orphans as should be overcome by the sea's motion would avail themselves; there were tin baths suitable for their ablutions, and cots in which they might be placed when washed. Miss Smith had under her a Scottish nurse and a French (Protestant) nursemaid, and between them the three women did what was necessary for their little charges.

Every day Miss Smith would conduct the elder orphans on deck, and give them instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic, the Scriptures, the English language (with which even the British orphans had but a trifling acquaintance) and the wisdom and beneficence of the Deity as evinced by His wonders in the deep. When they saw flying fish—"You see, my children," said Miss Smith, "how good God is. He has caused both the birds to swim and the fish to fly, in order that such perverse men as are too hardened in their blindness to be moved, as they should be, by the common course of nature, that is to say, by flying birds and swimming fish, may, seeing these still greater marvels, believe in spite of themselves and be saved."

For Miss Smith had been taught, and in her turn taught the orphans, that God had arranged all His marvels with a view to man, the central figure of the universe. "Why were worms made?" a disgusted orphan, digging in its little garden patch in England, had once inquired of her, and her reply was ready and simple. "To make ground-bait for man when he fishes, my love." And that seemed to the orphan a very reasonable reply, as, indeed, it was. Miss Smith had a reply to everything; no orphan ever caught her at a loss. "Why," the unfortunate and disturbed children would ask, "are we sick when the ship rolls?"

Miss Smith would attempt no discourse on the nature of the internal and gastronomic system of man, but would say placidly as she sewed, "In order, my dears, that we may know that we are in God's hand, and that of ourselves we are nothing. Man, the lord of creation and the noblest of the animals, has but to step off solid earth on to the rocking deep to lose all his equilibrium and his pride, and often a great deal more besides. It is good for us," said Miss Smith absently, as she bit off her thread, "to be thus humiliated. . . . But," she added, more kindly, "you will doubtless get better, my dears, as you become used to it."

The ship's doctor, an Irishman with long ginger whiskers, was passing by, and had stopped to listen to Miss Smith's discourse. Here he guffawed, with what seemed to Miss Smith a very unseemly, mocking kind of merriment, and ejaculated, with the vilest pronunciation imaginable, "*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.* Faith, ma'am, you know the reason for everything!"

"It is time, children," said Miss Smith to the orphans, "that you went below," and firmly she gathered the orphans together about her crinoline and swept them away. She did not care for the ship's doctor, who was a papist by upbringing, an atheist by temperament, if not by conviction, a disagreeable, mocking man, a quoter of Latin tags which were probably indelicate, a lover of strong drink, and scarcely to be considered a gentleman. Miss Charlotte Smith was herself the daughter of a very respectable English country clergyman, of the Evangelical persuasion. Such clergymen, such clergymen's daughters, abounded more greatly then than now.

2

The voyage took its course, broken only by the customary incidents of ocean journeys in those days, until some days after the S.S. *Providence* had rounded Cape Horn. Then the unfortunate and not very soundly constructed ship met with very foul weather, and one Saturday night collided with a sunken reef and was stove in below her water-line. All hope being given up, beyond that which lay in the launching of the boats and the improbable mercies of Providence, the captain sent a message to Miss Smith that she should immediately come on deck with her numerous little charges and their two nurses, in order that they might all be embarked in the boats. Hurriedly attiring themselves in such garments as were necessary (Miss Smith did not omit her crinoline), the three women dragged the orphans from their beds, wrapped their little coats or shawls about them, and conducted them on deck.

What a sight met their eyes! The sea's fury had now abated, but the smitten ship lay aslant at such an angle that the waves washed over her decks; she was lurching slowly to starboard, soon obviously to sink into her watery grave. The black and sullen seas, though appeased in violence, still moaned sullenly, while the receding storm still reverberated.

At the shocking spectacle, the orphans wailed, and Miss Smith, clasping her hands and looking up to heaven, exclaimed: "But for the mercy of Providence, we are indeed lost! Who shall survive the wrath of the Almighty as expressed by His storms and His seas?"

"Who indeed, madam?" replied the captain. "Very probably none of us will. Our only hope is in the

boats, and they have but small chance of reaching safety. But, by your leave, we will now embark these children. *They*, poor fatherless creatures, must all, if possible, be saved. And you yourself also, madam, for these infants would be in a sad plight without your care, should they ever win to safety."

Hearing these words, Anne-Marie, the French nursemaid, fearing that she was not to be among the rescued, set up a great lamentation, so that the infants, clinging about her, wept too, and every one was in an uproar, and Jean, the Scottish nurse, said sharply, "Hauld your whist, girl. If the Lord has it in His mind to save ye, saved ye wull be, and if He has it writ in His Book to drown ye, drowned ye wull be, wail ye never sae sair. So hauld your whist, lassie, and await His guid pleasure, and keep the bairns quiet. Their greeting adds confusion to the scene."

"Well spoken, Jean," said Miss Smith. "It is indeed of little use for any of us to bewail our fate, for what will be will be, and what is appointed for us we have none of us any idea. If it be God's will that we come safely through this fearful storm, why then we shall come through it. If not . . ."

"Why then, ma'am, we'll drown," Dr. O'Malley finished for her shortly, for, indeed, time was short. "*Dum loquor hora fugit*," he added, "that is to say, this is no time for blather."

"Very true, doctor," the captain agreed. "We must make all haste with the boats if any one is to be saved, for the sea is gaining on us at a prodigious rate."

It was a difficult business lowering the long boats into the tossing sea and then lowering into them the orphans, who, with the folly and incapacity of their years, made the task as troublesome as it could well be; indeed, several infants were unhappily lost in the

process. Finally the two largest boats were each loaded with twenty orphans and some sailors to take the oars and steer. In one of them Miss Smith embarked, while the other contained the nurse Jean. The third boat held the seven remaining orphans, Anne-Marie, and various of the officers and crew, including Dr. O'Malley. The fourth never got launched, for the ship foundered as they lowered it, and all left on deck were sucked beneath the turbulent waters. The third boat also was involved in this disaster, not having yet cleared herself from the ship sufficiently to weather the wash caused by the vessel's subsidence. The boat capsized, and its wretched inmates were flung into the sea, which was so wild that they were immediately scattered far and wide and no rescues could be effected by the other two boats.

"Unhappy fatherless infants!" Miss Smith mourned the seven perished orphans. "What a pitiful fate is theirs! But at least their little lives were (comparatively) innocent" — (though Miss Smith had for long been in charge of children, she did not actually know them very well)—"whereas the unfortunate doctor has been called to his last account with who knows what of sin upon his conscience! God does indeed move in a mysterious way. Yet indeed, are we ourselves in much better case? What chance have we to make any refuge in these lonely seas, or to survive long the tempests of the deep?"

These inquiries, which were indeed merely rhetorical, were not answered by the sailors, who needed all their breath for their labour. Miss Smith very properly used hers for singing hymns and offering up prayers for deliverance; as for the orphans, all theirs was spent on wailings and lamentings, due rather to present discomfort, for the cold and wet and the lurch-

ing of the boats was very disagreeable to them, than to fear, which they were too irrational to feel acutely.

Presently a voice hailed the boats from the water, and Dr. O'Malley was observed to be bobbing up and down near them, clinging to a spar from the wreck. With some difficulty he was extracted from the sea and dragged into the boat in which Miss Smith presided, where he lay in a great state of exhaustion, consoling himself with a bottle which, even in this fearful hour, he had not forgotten to place in his pocket before leaving the ship.

"Strange indeed," mused Miss Smith, "are the ways of Providence, which has thought fit, in Its inscrutable wisdom to save the doctor and to drown seven innocent infants."

3

Thus the fearful night wore through, becoming before morning much calmer, so that when dawn lightened the sky it revealed a dreary waste of gray waters which heaved indeed, and very disagreeably, but with so great an assuagement of their earlier fury that the danger of swamping seemed practically at an end. The two boats had kept within hail of one another, and daybreak found them but a few yards apart. The only other object visible in that vast and watery waste was a low mound of land which looked to be but a mile or so away.

"America!" ejaculated Miss Smith. "The Almighty be thanked that He has guided us aright through the deep!"

The doctor emitted a sound of scornful and intoxicated mirth. The sailors addressed Miss Smith with no greater contempt than that which they entertained for all her sex.

"America, ma'am," one of them said, "is some two thousand miles away. That is some lonely Pacific island, which may or may not be inhabited. We had best approach it, and, if it does not appear to be peopled by savages, we can land on its shores and rest a while and look for fresh water."

"With all my heart, my good men," Miss Smith agreed. "These unfortunate children are sadly in need of a little repose on dry land. Heaven send that it may not be inhabited by implacable natives!"

"Natives," the sailor answered her, "are very generally implacable, where they exist at all. So, by your leave, ma'am, should any signs of human life be observable on the island, we will not land, but make our escape as rapidly as may be."

"With all my heart," Miss Smith again agreed, and having communicated their project to the other boat, the men bent lustily to the oars and were very soon within a stone's throw of the island.

It had a most agreeable look, being surrounded, as such islands so frequently are, by a lagoon, half a mile in width, bounded by a low circular reef of red and white coral. The island itself, which had a rather curious formation, being two peninsulas joined by a narrow neck of land, had a sandy shore, and dense woods of palm trees, banana trees, bread-fruit trees, prickly pears, mangoes, and other vegetation familiar to all who have perused island literature. Further, it had, to the relief of the castaways, every appearance of being peaceful and uninhabited.

"We're in luck, it appears," said Dr. O'Malley, but Miss Smith reproved him.

"Luck, sir, is perhaps scarcely the word to apply to these fore-ordained mercies."

"As you like, my good girl, as you like. I admire

the way you keep it up, even, so to speak, in the maw of death. Yes, ma'am, I admire it, and I'm telling you so frankly. Get way on her, men. We must make for that gap in the reef, and then we should have a clear run on to yonder strip of beach. There's another foreordained mercy for you, ma'am, that this is a lagoon island and has a reef to shelter it, and isn't exposed to the waves, the way we'd be smashed to bits trying to land."

Even as it was, the billows broke too roughly on the beach to make landing a safe or agreeable task; however, it was presently accomplished, and both boats grounded on the sand.

What a landing was that! Cramped and chilly orphans stumbled or were lifted on to a glistening shore already warming under the morning sunlight, for it was promising to be a fair day. A dense growth of wood climbed back almost from the shores; it was full of the delightful noises of monkeys and of birds, moved, it seemed, to prodigious excitement by the advent of these strange visitors.

Miss Smith, also profoundly moved, gazed about her and recited the following lines:—

"Coral insect! unseen are his beautiful hues;
Yet in process of time, tho' so puny and frail,
O'er the might of the ocean his structures prevail;
On the surface at last a flat islet is spied,
And shingle and sand are heaped up by the tide;
Seeds brought by the breezes take root, and erewhile
Man makes him a home on the insect-built pile!"

"Apparently quite uninhabited," said Dr. O'Malley, when she had finished. "Not a footprint on the sands but our own: no traces of human visitation. What d'ye think, Thinkwell?"

"That you may be right, sir," replied the mate, "or you may be wrong. I take this to be one of the lonelier and remoter islands, and it may be that we are the first human creatures to have set foot on it. On the other hand, it may be one of those islands which the savages visit from time to time. We shall do well to make a very cautious inspection. Remember, we have not a weapon among us. And with all these children, and the two ladies . . ."

"There, there," interrupted the doctor, "no one wants to be killed by savages, ladies and children or not, so restrain your irrelevance. It is obvious that there are no savages here at the moment, so let us make ourselves as comfortable as we can while we may. No use looking ahead for danger. Jean here looks as calm as if she were on a trip on Loch Lomond, instead of being cast up on a wild island in Oceania. Eh, Jean?"

"Indeed, sir, I hope I am calm. If we are to be eaten by savages, it is all written in the Book, that is sairtain. And if it is not in the Book, we shall not be eaten."

"Faith, to be sure, and a very comforting thought, too. So long as it's in the Book, we shan't care, shall we? A sad pity we can't get a glimpse at that Book, eh?" The doctor, still slightly intoxicated, winked at Miss Smith, who, however, thought such levity ill-timed.

"Enough of this," she said, with some severity. "I cannot think, doctor, that this is the moment for ribaldry as to our pre-ordained fates. Rather should we be employed (having in mind particularly what day it is) in giving thanks to the Almighty for His present mercies. But what we have first to do is to seek some shelter where the children can repose, and,

if possible, to obtain something to eat and drink for their breakfasts. I have heard that the cocoa-nut yields a very pleasant milk. Yonder wood seems to be full of such nuts; we must obtain some."

"That is easily done," said the doctor. "*Animus est in patinis*; and quite right, too, for prayers will wait but hunger won't." So saying, he and the sailors went off to forage for food, taking with them the axe with which the boat had been provided, while Miss Smith and Jean made the forty children lie down on the soft green grass between the beach and the wood, where most of them fell presently very sound asleep. The two women, too anxious to repose, sat among them and talked together in low and calm tones of the terrible situation in which they found themselves.

Presently the doctor and sailors returned with their arms full of cocoa-nuts and all kinds of fruit.

"We have but to kindle a fire," said the doctor, "and we will have a capital breakfast. With my magnifying glass and the sun we will soon accomplish that. We can then boil some of the milk, in its shell. Later, we shall catch some fish and other small creatures suitable for frying. *Etiam stultis acuit ingenium fames*, eh, Miss Smith? We will live famously, be sure."

Such was his joviality that Miss Smith guessed that he had yet more rum taken, and shrank away. In such an awful situation, and on Sunday morning, too, to besot oneself with alcoholic liquor! What degradation! The sailors, who had not, from all appearances, been offered the opportunity of doing this, were gloomy and sour, and drew away to talk among themselves.

Presently the children began stirring, and the elder of them were prodigiously pleased and amazed at their strange surroundings, so that Miss Smith and the nurse

found it all they could do to keep their charges from scattering into the woods to play.

"Oh, I fancy it's safe enough," said the doctor, engaged in kindling a fire of sticks with his magnifying glass. "Still, ye never know, and they're tasty biteens for any prowling beast, the poor little devils. Faith, ma'am, if you and I chanced to be cannibals, we would have a famous breakfast, to be sure."

He laughed heartily at his own jest, but Miss Smith found it very shocking, and moved yet farther away from him.

"Cheer up, ma'am," he encouraged her. "*Dum fata sinunt vivite læti.* Never be down-hearted at all."

4

The day wore on, and became prodigiously hot. Our castaways were well occupied in exploring their island; they were fortunate enough to find a spring of fresh water not far from them, and all the usual luxuries without which no island is worthy to be so called, such as mangoes, bread-fruit, and so forth. As the sun grew stronger, and as there were no indications of ferocious beasts, Miss Smith, Jean, and the orphans moved into the shade of the wood, Miss Smith closely admonishing the children on no account to stray out of call.

After the midday meal, the sea being now comparatively smooth, the four sailors and Dr. O'Malley put out in the two boats in order to make a tour round the island.

"You will be back long before nightfall, I trust," said Miss Smith.

"We shall, then," the doctor assured her.

But the day wore on, and they were not back before nightfall. Miss Smith grew perturbed. What could

have happened? Fear filled the breasts of the two women, who found themselves thus alone, without male protection.

The night drew on, and sleeping arrangements had to be made. Most of the orphans were laid upon the ground, wrapped in coats; for a few of the youngest Miss Smith made a kind of tent of her crinoline, reluctant as she was to divest herself of this garment, the wearing of which so much enhanced the natural dignity of females.

In what tremor and agitation that night was spent, may be imagined. Jean, indeed, was fairly calm, relying still on the Book, though, as Miss Smith once told her shortly, as she had no acquaintance with its contents, it gave small reason for comfort. Miss Smith herself, not being a Calvinist but a Protestant Anglican, preferred to petition the Almighty for succour, which Jean, as she pointed out to her, could not with any show of logic do.

After a while the sleep of exhaustion ended this theological discussion, until Miss Smith was woken by infants clamouring for breakfast.

Eagerly the two women scanned the beach for the boats, but alas, there was no sign of them. A bright and beautiful day broke, heightened to its noon heat, wore to a drowsy afternoon, and still not a male human creature was within view, beyond the helpless and noisy little orphan boys.

"Have they deserted us?" cried Miss Smith. "Can even the doctor have such a heart of stone? No, I will not credit it, even of a papistical and drunken atheist. Have they then met with some accident or assault?"

"I dinna ken, miss," replied Jean, a very literal woman, who always answered, to the best of her capac-

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ity, the rhetorical questions of others. "I think," she went on, "I will give the younger bairns a wash, which they sorely need."

So saying, she set about this task. Miss Smith, too agitated to assist, and unwilling that the children should observe her agitation, moved to a little distance and sat on the shore, gazing out to sea.

Alas, what a sorry plight was theirs! Two women stranded in the middle of the ocean with forty defenceless children and no male protector. For gentlemen, Miss Smith felt, *are* a protection in such emergencies. Gentlemen are so practical, so strong, so admirably well-informed. Gentlemen can cut down trees, put up tents, capture birds, beasts, and fishes. Gentlemen are so progressive. Gentlemen know where they are and what to do about it.

For the first time in her life, Miss Smith would have given a great deal to see a pair of whiskers.

And, even as she succumbed to this longing, a voice hailed her, and, turning about, she saw the ginger whiskers of Dr. O'Malley emerging from the wood.

"Thank God!" Miss Smith breathed.

He walked up to her, and seemed in a great state of anger.

"Those scoundrels," he exclaimed. "Those dastardly rogues. The third mate, too, who should have known better. Scum! They are gone with the boats. They've left us in the lurch, devil take them."

"Impossible!" cried Miss Smith, nearly swooning.

" 'Tis so indeed, as I'll tell you. When we got round to the other side of the island, and had landed and explored it a little, those ruffians informed me of their project. They didn't like the look of the island, they said; they were afraid of a visit from savages, and, moreover, they were sure no ship would ever come

to such a lost spot. Anyhow, they were for leaving the island with the two boats, cargoed with fruit and cocoa-nuts, and setting out to look for some more likely island, or possibly striking some steamer line. We couldn't do it with all those children, they said; couldn't get the boats along. So, if you please, we were to leave the women and children here and make away by ourselves, the way we might have a chance of getting somewhere."

"My God," said Miss Smith. "What villainy! And you, doctor—you did not consent to their scheme?"

"I did not then. I gave Thinkwell a cracked jaw and Martin a black eye. But I couldn't do much against the lot of them. They pushed off and left me stunned on the beach. When I came to, they were well out to sea, bad luck to the Protestant devils. I couldn't do anything but camp for the night there and push back through the woods to-day, with the help of my compass. . . . Lord, but it's been a dry day! We must see about fermenting some of this fruit-juice, the way we'll get something fit to drink. They say there's good stuff in the palm trunks, too."

"Doctor," said Miss Smith, "I thank you from my heart for not deserting us. I have sometimes, perhaps, spoken harshly to you in the past—and indeed there are things I could wish otherwise in you, for we are all sinful creatures. But you have played a noble part in this distressing business."

"Not a bit, my dear creature, not a bit. To tell ye the truth, I don't for a moment think those scoundrels will be saved. I fancy we are better off where we are, where there is at least a chance of rescue, and plenty of food in the meantime. I dare say those fellows will be wishing themselves back before long. They may be set on by savages in canoes, or capsized in a squall

and eaten up by sharks, or a thousand things. Had I not thought so, I would not have been left behind, for, as they say, *ad suum quemque æquum est quæstum esse callidum*—which means, every man for himself. No, no, I stay here until I am taken away by some safer craft than an open boat."

5

Time wore on. In vain the castaways spied every day for a passing vessel: none passed or, if they passed, they stayed not. Weeks grew into months, months into years. Dr. O'Malley succeeded in fermenting the juice of mangoes to his satisfaction, and extracting wine from the palm, and passed much of his time in the happy intoxication thereby induced. "*Bibere papaliter*," he would murmur. "Sure, if it is not quite that, it is the best I can do on this forsaken spot." Miss Smith endeavoured to redeem him; at last, succumbing to propinquity and persuasion, she married him. The doctor's earlier wife was so many thousand miles away that he did not think it necessary to mention her. He told Miss Smith that he must marry some one, and that he could not wait until the eldest female orphans came to suitable years. Obviously, too, he said, their position, at present a little compromising, must, in the interests of propriety, be regularised by matrimony. Miss Smith saw that point, but did not think it right to marry a Roman Catholic. The doctor assured her that that was no matter; his Catholicism was merely nominal, and only came on when he had too much mango-juice taken, and anyhow he would promise not to influence in that direction any children they might have. At that Miss Smith blushed very much, and thought it more proper to consent. A lady cannot, she had been well taught by

her mother, discuss with a gentleman the children she and he may have, without subsequently marrying him. It simply cannot be done. So Miss Smith consented to become (as she thought) Mrs. O'Malley, and they were married according to the Scottish rite, before two witnesses, the dour and disapproving Jean and the eldest orphan.

I have now to record the sad fact that, far from redeeming the doctor from excessive fruit and palm juice, Miss Smith little by little abandoned her principle of abstinence and took to these pleasant and fermented liquors herself, until, alas, she was too frequently to be found in a state of cheerful irresponsibility and garrulity very far from the discretion of her spinster days. I cannot account for this: it may have been the climate, or the influence of her husband, or merely the gradual abandonment of hope of return to the world. Whatever the cause, the result was an increased sympathy between the so-called husband and wife, for, as the doctor remarked, "*Ad connectendas amicitias, tenacissimum vinculum est morum similitudo*. Which means, my dear, that I like you better tipsy."

Meanwhile, the orphans grew up together, under the guidance and tutelage of these three adults, and there were added to them the ten children born to Dr. O'Malley and Miss Smith, who had the Victorian knack of progenitiveness. Some of them were twins.

In 1870, Dr. O'Malley was devoured, while out swimming, by a shark. This tragic event followed on a very violent quarrel which he had had with Miss Smith, he having been found instructing some of his children in popish rites and doctrines while in liquor.

"*In vino veritas*," he replied to her rebukes. "And, while we're about it, here's some more truth for you,

me dear." He proceeded, in a very disagreeable manner, to call her a wanton, revealing to her for the first time that she was his mistress and not his wife, and, in fact, Miss Smith still. Jean, who was present at the scene, and to whom Miss Smith turned for support under the outrage, merely observed that she had "kenned it all the while," but had thought it better to say nothing, in order that Miss Smith might at least believe herself to be respectably married. "For I kenned weel," said Jean, "that ye'd do it whether or no, and if ye had done it knowing the truth, ye would have been committing a sin. So I held my whist, as *he* should have done to the end. Men!"

That same day, the doctor terminated his career in the sad and violent manner recorded above. Miss Smith, in her newly revealed relationship to him, scarcely liked to mourn him or play the widow. She regarded his removal as a dispensation of Providence, and decided that the respectable course now was to forget him as soon as might be.

6

And so the little island nation developed along its own lines, isolated and remote, year after year, decade after decade, century after century (for, as we know, the twentieth century followed the nineteenth). A strange community indeed! All those inter-marrying orphans of many races—what have their descendants become? And what the descendants of the doctor and Miss Smith? What strange strands of mid-Victorian piety and prudery are woven with the primitive instincts of such a race, remote from any contacts with the wider world? What are their religions, what their outlook, what their speech, what culture or learning have they won? Is Miss Smith long since dead, or

does she perhaps still reign, nearly a century old, the actual ancestress of many inhabitants, the spiritual head of all? What has Miss Charlotte Smith, the English clergyman's daughter, now become? What of her pieties and her pruderies is left after nearly seventy years of island life? What traces, ancestral or influential, of the Irish doctor, are to be found among the island people? Are they still a Victorian people, or have they suffered, even as we, the phases of the passing years? Or have they perhaps reverted to mere savagery?

CHAPTER II

AFTER SEVENTY YEARS

I

Mr. Thinkwell was a lecturer in sociology in the University of Cambridge, and a very amiable, learned, and gentleman-like man, who lived in Grange Road. In the year 1923 he was fifty-three years of age, a widower with three grown children, Charles, William, and Rosamond. Of these, Charles, who was twenty-five, clever and conceited, had, since the war, been living in London and experimenting in literature. William (twenty-two) had, for the last three years, been at Trinity College, Cambridge, reading for the Natural Sciences Tripos, in which he had, being a youth of some scienitfic talent, acquitted himself with credit. Rosamond (nineteen) had, since leaving school, lived at home with her father, being neither eager in the pursuit of further learning nor apt at the practice of any profession.

It happened one morning early in the Long Vacation that Mr. Thinkwell received by post a packet from his aged aunts in Sydney. He had never seen his aunts, for his father, the son of a rough and not very virtuous but wealthy sea captain long settled in Australia, had come to England as a young man, to practise at the English bar, and had married and brought up his children there. The sea captain, Mr. Thinkwell's grandfather, had died in the eighteen-seventies. As we shall see, though he had behaved ill enough, in fact

too ill, he had been conscience-stricken at the last.

The letter which Mr. Thinkwell took out of the bulky envelope was written in the slender, flowing, sloping hand often used by old ladies, and more surely still by such old ladies as are rather genteel than actually gentle, for, though Mr. Thinkwell's father had been a highly educated man, the family whom he had left in Australia had remained the family of a well-off merchant captain who had started as a common sailor. Mr. Thinkwell's aunts were well considered in Sydney, but did not consort with the local aristocracy, such as it was.

"*Dear Nephew*"—(ran the letter)—"*Your Aunt Martha and myself have recently moved house, in the course of which we had a great clean up and a grand rummage among your Grandfather's old things, turning up a great number of curious old sea Treasures, and among them we came on the Enclosed, which your Aunt Martha and I well remember your Grandfather giving to your Grandmother and ourselves in his last illness, in* 1875, *and bidding us make it public after his death, but of course your Grandmother thought nothing more about it, nor did we, but put it away with the rest of his things as a Memento, along with his telescope, sharks' teeth, etc., etc. But your Aunt and I remember his saying before he died that it was sadly on his conscience that he and some fellow sailors had long ago deserted a Party on some remote Island, making off with the boats and leaving them to fend for themselves, and that, though he had not liked to make the tale public while he lived, for fear he should be ill thought of for the part he (being then a mate though only a third) and his companions had played, he desired us to make amends after his death by giving the*

Information contained in these Papers (which he had prepared some years ago in a previous attack of illness which he recovered from, however, so put Papers away) to some one who would organise an expedition to this Island and discover whether any of the unfortunate Party still survived. I recollect my Mother promising to do this, to soothe him, but of course we never thought of it again, and the papers have lain in the old sea-chest all this time, until we came on them in clearing up. It scarcely seems worth while to trouble about such old tales, and the Party are surely by now all deceased, even if they survived at all, but we thought you might like to see the Papers, so am enclosing them. Do not trouble to return.

"I suppose you are not thinking of ever paying a visit to Australia. Should be very pleased to see you if ever you came across. Hoping that yourself and family are all well, I remain

"Your affec^ate aunt,

"Sarah Thinkwell."

Having perused this letter, and feeling mildly interested in its contents, Mr. Thinkwell proceeded to extract from the envelope the other documents it contained, which were very yellow and ancient, and consisted of a roughly-drawn ocean chart, marked with latitude and longitude, and dotted with islands, one of which was marked with a cross, and a sheet of paper written over in a vile and common scrawl which Mr. Thinkwell recognised from some old letters of his father's, as that of his grandfather, Captain William Thinkwell. The inscription was brief. It ran:

"*Pacific Ocean* (*Oceania*), *lat. about* 23, *long.* 115,

fertile coral island, uninhabited by Natives, consisting of two parts, joined by issmus and surrounded by lagoon. On it were cast up, from S.S. "Providence," wrecked by Act of God, May, 1855, *on the passage to San Francisco, a Party. Viz.: Miss Smith, Dr. O'Malley, a nurse Jean, and a great number of Orfen Children, about* 40. *Might be there yet, as Island seemed well provided, but more likely dead. Obliged by circs. and no blame to any one, to leave them there, and have not yet been able to send Rescue Party, but hope this may be done after my decease, as should not care to go to next World without mentioning this, and can't say when my time will come, having fits as I do.*

"(*Signed*) *William Thinkwell.*

"*November* 10*th,* 1867."

"Island should be known by its shape, viz., two parts joined by neck, wooded hills, coral reef round lagoon."

"H'm," said Mr. Thinkwell, "a bland ruffian indeed." He thoughtfully laid down the papers, removed his glasses, and took a drink of the coffee which Rosamond had just passed him. "This is really a little interesting."

"Yes," said Rosamond, who was an absent girl, and often appeared to be thinking about something other than what was being mentioned.

"*What* is interesting, Rosamond?" Mr. Thinkwell somewhat sharply asked her, for this inattentive habit in his child annoyed him, both because it is tiresome in a companion and because it vexed him to see in Rosamond a vague and wandering mind. Sometimes he was afraid that Rosamond had taken in some ways after her poor mother, an excellent creature, but with

an inadequate power of response to himself. But he knew that these two were in reality very different, for the thoughts of the wife and mother had been engrossed mainly by practical matters, whereas those of the daughter appeared to stray in some less useful direction, except, indeed, when they were, as was frequently the case, upon things to eat.

Rosamond, recalled to the moment by her father's question, replied readily but inaptly, assuming that her father had been reading the morning newspaper, that she supposed it was the state of Europe which was, as usual, a little interesting. Possibly Central Europe. . . . This she hazarded with the air of a child making a good guess.

"Not to you, my dear Rosamond," Mr. Thinkwell replied, "as I believe you don't yet know the difference between Yugo-Slavia and Czecho-Slovakia."

"She never will," put in Charles, entering the room at this moment. "She doesn't know the difference between any two things, unless they're to eat. She can't distinguish between women and men, nor between the Georgian poets. She mixes up the Sitwells and John Drinkwater and calls them both Drinkwell, to rhyme with us. The poor child's mind is, so far, entirely undiscriminating. What's that chart you have, father? It looks like islands."

"It *is* islands," Mr. Thinkwell replied, and at the word islands Rosamond's small round face turned pink, and her mouth, sticky with honey, fell open. It was untrue that her mind was entirely undiscriminating, for, in point of fact, she could distinguish between every Pacific island shown on maps, having, from an early age, made them her special study. It is probable that there was no island literature written, of any period, which she had not perused. Some young

female minds are like this—inert, slovenly and dreamy, but with one great romance. As some young women perhaps meditate in idle hours, "When I shall be a great writer, actress, or doctor"; "when I shall play hockey for England"; or "when I shall love and be loved, marry a man, have a house, have children" . . . so others dream, "When I shall explore the world, find new islands, see coral reefs. . . ." It is a dream which does not well equip them for life, for it is sadly apt to go under without fulfilment, and leave them for ever in what the psycho-analysts call a state of frustration. Then they have to endeavour to sublimate their longing by literature, love, games, or some such inadequate substitute for adventure.

Anyhow Rosamond, all agape, slice of bread and honey in hand, stared round-eyed at the dirty yellow paper by her father's plate, seeing that it was indeed a chart of some part of the ocean, and as full of islands as a pudding of currants.

"What scale?" she inquired, with her mouth full, her chief desire being to know how near the islands were together. For her part, she thought that the ideal islands lay in groups of three or four within canoeing or even swimming distance of one another, so that now and then one could have a change. And on each island different trees and flowers, different creatures, different colours. . . . Oh, Rosamond could discriminate, when discrimination was worth while. Not between the sexes, the Drinkwells, or the Central European states, but between any things that mattered.

Charles had reached out for the chart, and was studying it.

"The scale appears to be five hundred miles to the inch. Some of these islands seem fairly close together, some a great many miles apart. The one to

which our attention seems specially called is at least two hundred miles from the next. Who drew this map, father, and why is one island singled out for our notice with a cross and some letters. . . . What are they . . . O, R, F, E, N, S. . . ."

"Orphans," said Mr. Thinkwell. "That, apparently, was the way your great-grandfather used to spell it. Your great-grandfather wished to convey to posterity—strictly to posterity only—that on that island he and some fellow rascals deserted a lady, a doctor, a nurse, and a number of orphan children, in the year 1855. He wrote this document, which tells the tale, in 1867, when he seems to have thought it possible, though improbable, that some of the party might yet survive."

He passed to Charles his Aunt Sarah's letter, together with his grandfather's statement. Rosamond read them over Charles's shoulder, and William, coming down very late to breakfast, a square-shouldered, rough-headed youth, with near, peering sight, and a sweet, wide grin, began on his porridge.

"Exciting," Charles commented, having perused the papers. "Heartless old ladies, our great-grandmamma and great-aunts. They none of them seem to have worried themselves at all over these poor castaways. Now great-grandpapa had his excuses; he had obviously behaved in a shady way and wasn't asking for trouble. He did his best for those he had marooned directly it seemed safe. But his female relatives were merely callous. Now, when great-grandpapa died, in 1875, there might have been quite a sporting chance of saving some of the castaways alive."

"But they're probably still alive," said Rosamond, solemn-eyed and glad. "The orphan children—they'd only be about seventy now. Great-grandfather says

the island was comfortable and fertile, and some Pacific islands have lovely climates. They'd probably live till eighty or ninety."

"What in the world," said William, over his porridge, "are you all talking about?"

"Who *were* those so-called orphans?" Charles said. "Were they all brothers and sisters? Were they of two sexes? Because, if of two sexes and unrelated, they are probably by now great-grandparents. There is probably a thriving community on Orfens Island."

Mr. Thinkwell referred to his grandfather's statement.

"About forty orphan children. That sounds, I think, like more than one family. As to their sex, we know nothing. But in any case," the sociologist meditated, "there was this Doctor O'Malley and Miss Smith, not to mention Jean the nurse. It may well be that some of those on the island became parents, and even grandparents, if spared long enough. An interesting thought. . . . More likely, the whole lot perished very soon after being left there."

"People don't," said Rosamond, "perish very much on desert islands. I've noticed that. They survive until rescued, as a rule. But still, father, I think no more time should be lost before we rescue them. When can we start?"

"Not to-morrow," Mr. Thinkwell said. "I have an examiners' meeting."

William had now, since no one answered his questions, read the documents and grasped the business in hand.

"I say," he said, "let's really go and find this island. You could take next term off, father, and, thank God, I'm a free man myself at last. Charles is becoming Cockneyfied and too damned literary and needs a

change; a sea voyage might cure him of wielding the pen. And Rosamond may as well come, too; she's idle, wherever she is, and she'll enjoy the new and strange foods. . . . That's settled, then."

William had always been practical. He did not allow grass to grow under his feet, once he had made up his mind.

"A steam yacht," said Rosamond, "might be best."

"That would not," said William, "be large enough to remove all the orphans on, should they wish to be rescued. I calculate that there might be about seven thousand of them by now. Allowing that the forty orphans made twenty pairs, and that each pair had, on an average, ten children, and that the next two generations did the same. . . ."

"The orphans were not rabbits, William," said Mr. Thinkwell.

"They were Victorians, though," said Charles. "I expect William's quite right. They would need at least a liner, large size, to take them away. We must go on a liner. We must arrange with one of the companies. Wouldn't the Royal Geographical Society finance the expedition? It ought to, as it's to explore an undiscovered island. Or the Royal Humane Society. . . ."

"A party of pleasure," said Rosamond, biting an apple, and turning the words over softly to herself, her eyes watching her father's dark, fantastic face for signs.

Mr. Thinkwell wiped his curious mouth with his napkin and pushed back his chair. He strolled to the window and looked out on Grange Road. He lit his pipe.

"Father," said Rosamond, questioning.

"My dear?" said Mr. Thinkwell absently, as he had been used to reply to Rosamond's mamma.

"Rosamond means, what have you decided to do in the matter of these unhappy orphans?" Charles interpreted. "I certainly think it is up to us, as Christian philanthropists, to do something. Especially since it was our great-grandfather. . . . The Government might organise an expedition, possibly. Or the *Daily Whoop*. Conducted, of course, by the Thinkwell family. . . ."

"Government," said Mr. Thinkwell placidly, "nothing. And the Royal Geographical Society nothing. And vulgar réclame, detestable always, is unnecessary at this stage. I shall by all means make an expedition to search for this alleged island. If white human life should yet survive on it in any form (which is improbable) it would be a remarkably interesting subject for investigation, and I should keep it for the present for my own researches. Since you all seem interested in my plans, I will tell you that I intend, early next month, to go via the Panama Canal to Tahiti or some other Polynesian island which lies on the steamer routes, and from there I shall hire a cargo steamer of some kind and set out in it to look for this island. It will be a purely private enterprise, with no publicity attached, and unreferred to by the press. If we should find the island, and if, by a curious chance, there should prove to be white persons on it, and should they, or some of them, want to be removed, that could be arranged later. Having waited some seventy years, they could wait, I imagine, a little longer. It might be a simple matter or a complicated economic problem in the solution of which I should be compelled to seek outside help."

"A very sound scheme," said Charles. "And pre-

cisely the right way to do it. That's all settled, then. William and Rosamond and I can be ready in a fortnight. It will take us about that to get our tropical outfit, I imagine."

"I see," said Mr. Thinkwell, "that you all mean to insist on coming too. Very well, then, come. But there must be no babbling about it, either now or on the voyage out. It must not get about America, mind. Nor about Cambridge."

Mr. Thinkwell was a rather secretive man, and never cared that his affairs should get about anywhere, let alone America and Cambridge. Perhaps he inherited that from his grandfather, the sailor, who had kept his counsel so well for twenty years.

His children promised that it should be as he desired, and then they looked up the Panama sailings in the press.

2

They were going on a trip to the Polynesian Islands, and would be away at least six months. That was all they told Cambridge. Saying the lovely and liquid words, Polynesian Islands, Rosamond would colour and stammer, as if she were in love.

She would have to give up her Girl Guides for a term; she was going to the Polynesian Islands. She divested herself of all that clinging web of obligation and performance that spins itself so readily and so closely about the young ladies resident in Cambridge whose papas are dons. Even about such as Rosamond, idle, inactive, ill-informed, jejune, and withdrawn, these webs are spun, and they command Girl Guides, act in Christmas plays, and take stalls at bazaars. It is difficult, in university towns, to be idle and alone. But in Polynesia, in Polynesia. . . . Oh, on Polynesian

Islands, one could surely be both idle and alone. To lie under the mango tree and eat of the fruit thereof without any personal inconvenience whatever—that dear ideal, condemned by missionaries, of the savage and idle soul, could there, if anywhere, be achieved. In those unknown, dreaming, island-dotted seas—it was there that real life lay. Orphans nothing, as Mr. Thinkwell would have put it had he felt as Rosamond felt, instead of, in fact, precisely the reverse. Rosamond was not much interested in the orphans or the orphans' children. She wanted to land on and explore an uninhabited island for herself. Perhaps her father would let her do that, while he and the others steamed off seeking orphans.

CHAPTER III

THE VOYAGE

I

THE Thinkwell family, having, by the Panama route, arrived at the famous and picturesque island of Tahiti, some time towards the end of July, chartered a small cargo steam schooner, with an English captain and a brown crew, which was trading about the islands for copra, palm oil, and pearls, to take them on their voyage of discovery. They imagined that Orphan Island must lie some two thousand miles south of the Tahiti group. When questioned as to his chances of finding it, the captain of the schooner, a gentleman named Paul, said that this was largely a matter of chance. There were any number of coral islands in those lonely parts of the Pacific which had never been visited by trading ships, or, probably, by natives. If the chart were at all accurate, it should, of course, be possible to discover and identify this island, particularly as it was of an unusual shape. The voyage thither, said Captain Paul, might take about three weeks or a month, calling at the various islands *en route* where he was accustomed to do business. It would be rather an expensive trip, he was afraid. Mr. Thinkwell was afraid so, too, as he perceived that Captain Paul was rather a greedy man. However, as a sociologist, he was aware that most men are this, and he did not see that he was likely to drive a better bargain, so he closed with Captain Paul for part use of

his *Typee* for six hundred dollars a month, and they set forth.

"You read Hermann Melville, I infer," Charles said to Captain Paul, as they watched the mountains of Tahiti recede. Charles admired this writer a good deal.

"Used to as a boy," said Captain Paul.

"A writer," said Mr. Thinkwell, "in my opinion overrated. A clumsy and undistinguished style. In my generation we had got through Melville by the time we left school. He seems now to be better thought of."

"He is uncommonly good," said Charles, who knew what was what in literature.

Rosamond, though she did not know what was what, thought so too, for Melville wrote of voyages and islands. But William found *The Voyage of the Beagle* better stuff, and Captain Paul was bored by talk about books, and said, to change the subject, "Come and see my turtles. I have a pair of very fine turtles on board, gathered on the Natupa beach."

Gathered, he said, as if the turtles had been fruit or flowers. A romantic word, Rosamond felt. Romantic turtles, and a most romantic man. She stared at him, with grave, wide eyes and open mouth. She adored him, as she had adored Sir Ernest Shackleton when she had heard him speak on his Arctic explorations, and Mr. Walter de la Mare when, because of his poetry, she had sat through his lectures while his half-caught meanings had drifted above her head like wreaths of mist. Captain Paul was different from either of these. He was, in point of fact, a compulsorily retired naval officer. The Thinkwells had been told this, not by Captain Paul, but they did not know what he had done to be retired. A broken navy man. Rosamond repeated the phrase to herself, liking it very much. It

suited Captain Paul of the *Typee,* a tall, dark, pale man in the later thirties, with a slack, sad mouth and long blue eyes. What could he have done, that the navy should have broken him? Some frightful act, some deed of shame. Got drunk, perhaps, on his watch, and wrecked a ship. . . . Or falsified the log, or taken his superior officer's wife. . . . Or committed bigamy, or trigamy, since sailors, one knew, had a wife in every port. Anyhow, whatever his crime, Captain Paul (captain, of course, only of the *Typee*) had been now for some time trading among the islands for copra and oil. A happy lot enough, but one supposed that he felt the ignominy, and that was why his eyes brooded and his mouth was sad.

Mr. Thinkwell, Charles, and William did not care about Captain Paul so much as Rosamond did. That was only natural. Fallen men and women are usually preferred by the sex other than their own. Their own sex is apt to say, "A bit of a rotter," or "Not the style I care about," and leave it at that. Sisters often cannot understand why their brothers like women who seem to them obviously second-rate, and brothers feel the same difficulty about some of their sisters' male friends. Not that Charles and William disliked Captain Paul; he had, indeed, a charm which Charles felt, and William perceived that he knew a lot about the island fauna and flora, and the seas in general, and liked to talk with him. But it was not to be expected that they should see him as a high, broken, romantic being.

There was also on board the *Typee* a Mr. Merton, a trader. He was carefully shaved but not well dressed; indeed, he needed new shoe laces, and his white ducks were more the colour of drakes. A faint alcoholic odour often floated about him. Charles liked

him, saying that he had an adventurer's mind. He had been a missionary (Anglican) before he took to trading, and was still rather religious by fits and starts. This aspect of him rather bored Charles, who had not religion, and did not consider Anglicanism well suited to Polynesian islanders.

"As you know so much both about Anglicanism and Polynesian islanders," said Mr. Merton sarcastically, "I won't venture to contradict you."

"Frankly, though," said Charles, "do *you*? For my part I feel that savages, if they become Christian at all, should become either Roman Catholics or—or dissenters of some kind, you know. Anglicanism must be so awfully different to what they are used to."

"No religion," said Mr. Merton, "is very different from any other, when South Sea islanders practise it. All creeds, in their hands, acquire a curious sameness. It really matters very little which church they join, dear people. I, unlike you, fancy that they are very well suited by them all. That was why I gave up instructing them in any one faith, and took to trying to improve their conditions by trading with them."

Charles did not think that this was why, as he had heard otherwise from Captain Paul, but he did not say so. In his dealings with people, Charles was, on the whole, delicate-minded and indifferent, though it occurred from time to time that he fell into an odd, ill-bred impudence, which was partly due to the effects of the war on his nervous system, and partly to the demands of the literary profession, which, as is very well known, not infrequently leads young men into somewhat vulgar and acrimonious exchanges of personal comments.

But the effects of missionary enterprise on Pacific

islanders did not really interest him, and he merely said, "Look! I should think that would be a tropic-bird."

William, who was standing near, produced his bird-glasses and said no, it would, on the other hand, be a frigate-bird.

"Both," said Charles, who was superficial about birds, "have long tails," and he strolled off to look at the turtles which Captain Paul had gathered on the beach at Natupa.

Captain Paul walked up the deck to Rosamond, who was standing by the rail, gazing at the Pacific in a trance of joy. He liked her simplicity, her little round, yellow, bobbed head, and her happiness.

"See the bonettas dancing, Miss Rosamond?" he said. "Down there—see—straight below us. Just beyond the foam. Gay little chaps, aren't they?"

Rosamond looked deep, deeper, down through blue-green waters, and saw the bonettas dancing. She nodded her head. She more often nodded than said yes. Much happiness made her more inarticulate, even, than usual.

"Funny, silent little thing," thought Captain Paul.

"Albicores, too, see," he said, jerking his pipe at the ocean.

"Yes," said Rosamond, and her gaze lost itself, fathoms deep, in green seas.

Mr. Thinkwell strolled towards Mr. Merton, his glasses tilted on his peeling nose, his Panama hat pulled over his eyes, Hugo's *Russian in Three Months without a Master* open in his hand, for he was a very industrious man, and would learn anything at any time, even Russian.

"It is getting hotter," he said. "The wind seems to have changed, and to be now blowing northwest."

After a little more conversation in this vein, Mr. Thinkwell mentioned Orphan Island.

"The merest gamble, of course," he said. "The chances of finding any European life there are, roughly speaking, about one in a hundred thousand."

"Nigger life," said Mr. Merton, "is certainly more probable, if there should be life at all."

"There might be both," Mr. Thinkwell suggested. "That," he mused, "would be a curious event."

"Lot o' half castes," said the trader. "That's what that would mean."

"You regard it, then, as quite impossible that the two strains should co-inhabit the island unmixed?"

"Not for long," said Mr. Merton. "Not likely."

"That would be a very interesting and remarkable contingency indeed," Mr. Thinkwell said. "An island community of mixed race, like Pitcairn Island. What would be their standards and habits, I wonder?"

"Nigger," said Mr. Merton briefly. "Nigger always wins out. You'd find the women would sink, in one generation, to nigger notions of morality."

"The women, you think, more rapidly than the men?"

"Oh, the men. . . . I was speaking of morality—female virtue."

"And what about male virtue?"

"Honesty, you mean, and industry, and so forth. . . . Well, those qualities aren't quite so quickly affected."

"I perceive," said Mr. Thinkwell, "that you are one of those who think of virtue in the two sexes in different terms. An interesting state of mind, and one often to be met with, especially among persons rather of action than of thought. You can trace it back many thousands of years. . . ."

"Now he's back to primitive man," thought Mr. Merton. He said, "As to thought, I've thought a bit in my time. You have to, in the islands. But it doesn't get you much further. In my case, it only led to my having to chuck the preaching job. Too much thought isn't healthy."

"A mind," Mr. Thinkwell classified Mr. Merton in his thoughts, "neither relevant, logical, nor very sincere. He finds a difficulty in sticking to a point. He digresses. This is often one of the effects of continued intemperance."

He got back to practical matters, and they talked of the probability or otherwise of their striking the precise island required. Mr. Thinkwell was inclined, as a theorist, to hold that this depended wholly on the accuracy of the chart. Mr. Merton, as a person of action rather than thought, knew the affair to be more of a hazard than this.

"Islands," he said, "are chancey little devils. They lie doggo, saying nothing, just below the horizon, while you steam by. Other times, you'll catch them napping —surprise them, so to speak. Chancey little devils."

"You surprise me," said Mr. Thinkwell.

But Rosamond, who was standing near with Captain Paul, peering through a spy-glass, was not surprised at all. Of course islands were like that; she had always known it.

Suddenly, "An island," cried Rosamond. "Oh . . . lots of islands." Captain Paul agreed.

"The Low Archipelago," he said. "The Paumotu Group. Some of them lie pretty close together. We're going to do some business there. You'll have seen them before, on your voyage out—a day's run from Tahiti."

"We passed them in the night," said Mr. Thinkwell. "Nothing to be seen."

But now they were to be seen, in the clear, late afternoon light. Remote at first, the shadows of moths' wings on transparent opal spaces; here one, there another, great pale widths between. Then, as the *Typee* approached, they took on substance and colour, and turned, before the voyagers' eyes, into emerald green crescents or circles ringing or ringed with blue lagoons, like the coral islands of which one has always heard.

Jewels, green enamelled jewels, painted like parrots' wings, thought Charles.

Captain Paul and Mr. Merton thought sailors' and traders' thoughts of navigation and of trade.

Mr. Thinkwell thought, "It will be very interesting to see these island populations at close quarters."

William thought he could see gannets fishing on the beach, and tried to identify the vegetation that climbed back from the shores.

But Rosamond merely thought, "Islands—coral islands. . . ."

In the evening they anchored a quarter of a mile off one of the larger islands. The air they breathed became sweet with the smell of tropical plants and flowers. Mr. Thinkwell thought it was probably unwholesome, and recalled how sailors had sometimes swooned on first inhaling it. But no one on board the *Typee* swooned, or experienced any sensation but that of pleasure.

Mr. Merton took a boat ashore, to negotiate with the local traders. The Thinkwell family came ashore, too, and were very greatly entranced with what they saw, heard, and smelt upon the island.

In the lagoon, the colour of still, clear flame in

the sunset, brown men dived for pearls, watched by a Presbyterian missionary. This missionary cut Mr. Merton, for he did not care for him or think him a good man. So he did not join in the general rush to be in at the landing of the trader's boat. Mr. Merton did a brisk trade with several natives and a Frenchman, and they returned to the *Typee* by moonlight with a cargo of copra, pearls, and oil.

2

The Low Archipelago group of islands stretches for over a thousand miles, and for over a week the *Typee* cruised among them, sometimes landing to trade, sometimes signalling so that any one who wished to do business could come out to the schooner. And out they came, in long canoes, loaded with copra and oil; white traders, brown Polynesians, giggling, goggle-eyed girls and grave men, the natives for the most part rummaging among the goods for exchange that were piled in the *Typee's* hold, the white men taking payment in cash.

Mr. Thinkwell, much interested, observed the habits, appearance, and speech of the native islanders. But it was, as he remarked, all pretty much as one had always been told. There are few discoveries possible now in Polynesia—unless one should be so fortunate as to come on a hitherto overlooked island.

"Monotonous," said Captain Paul, and yawned. "A monotonous life."

Rosamond felt sorry that he found it so; to her, she knew, it must be always otherwise, but she felt compassion for him, compelled to rove from island to island and buy things he did not really want from persons who bored him. Perhaps, as an officer and a gentleman, he had a feeling about trade. . . .

Looking up and finding her gray eyes inquiringly and compassionately upon his face, Captain Paul laughed and ventured for the first time to kiss her, for they were standing in the dark alone. Rosamond coloured a good deal, for she was not a kissing kind of girl and did not really enjoy it; it made her shy and awkward.

"You darling baby," said Captain Paul. "I suppose now you're offended, and will tell papa."

"No," said Rosamond. "I'm not offended. How could I be? And I shan't tell father. He wouldn't be interested. He'd only think it rather vulgar."

"Well, then," said Captain Paul, "I may do it again, mayn't I?" and did it again, and Rosamond coloured still more. Men were funny, she knew already. She meant by this that, whereas she had quite a strong and thrilling emotion for Captain Paul, but did not want to kiss him in the least, he had no feeling for her beyond a playful tenderness and yet did want to kiss her.

"I would rather," said Rosamond politely, "it didn't happen often, if you don't mind," and he laughed again.

Rosamond did not wish it to happen often, not because she agreed with her father that it was rather vulgar, for of vulgarity, refinement, and such qualities, she knew, in spite of having been reared in Cambridge, remarkably little, as little, almost, as some young non-human animal might be supposed to know; but she had no particular liking for the act of kissing, and felt also that, coming from Captain Paul to her, it was a step down on his part, unworthy, as it were, of a man of action and travel, whose heart should be all set on adventure. She preferred him to tell her stories of the sea.

CHAPTER IV

THE ARRIVAL

THE voyage passed, like a strange and lovely dream. For days and nights they flew full-sail before the favouring trades; then, for days and nights again, they steamed against contrary winds.

They passed the region of close-lying islands, and seemed alone on vast blue seas, then an island, or a group, would loom up on the horizon, and off they would make for it. Some islands they would leave alone, expecting no profitable business there; some were mere untenanted, lonely reefs, others had a reputation for fierce, or even cannibal inhabitants, and on these the *Typee* made no call.

There came a morning when, according to the chart, they should be within a day and a night's journey of Orphan Island. Mr. Thinkwell and Charles began to be excited and anxious, lest the chart should be at fault, or the whole affair a hoax. They had sceptical, excitable natures. William and Rosamond, more placid, were not anxious at all. Besides, Rosamond knew that the chart was quite accurate enough for its purpose and that her great-grandfather had not hoaxed them. Always Rosamond believed everything; her nature was credulous.

Rosamond, as we know, was right this time, and when they came on deck early in the pearly loveliness of the morning, what should they see through their glasses but, on the far horizon, a transparent shape

that seemed like two islands joined by a thin neck of land.

"That should be it," said Captain Paul. "It's the only island for two hundred miles."

Mr. Thinkwell was relieved and pleased. His grandfather, then, had guided them aright so far.

"Now," said Charles, loudly and firmly, "now I believe the whole story. Now I believe we shall find the island full of orphans and descendants of orphans."

"More likely," said Mr. Merton, who was something of a pessimist, "that the whole crowd of 'em perished right off, or were massacred by savages. Eaten," he added, after a pause. "Eaten right up," and he looked at Rosamond to see how she took that. But Rosamond, who had read such a very great deal of literature about persons who had been eaten right up, or had been in grave danger of being eaten but had escaped, was not in the least shocked by the thought. It seemed to her quite a natural, commonplace end. And, anyhow, she knew well that the orphans had not been eaten. Unless, indeed, the doctor and Miss Smith should have eaten them, when hard pressed for other food. Persons on islands, Rosamond had heard, develop strange tastes. They will eat raw fish sometimes. One may not judge them.

Through the pearly morning the *Typee* drove before the west wind towards Orphan Island, which grew, moment by moment, less transparent, more coloured, till the voyagers could distinguish the line of reef that circled it, the glisten of white beach, the clustering woods. And then they saw houses. Not the white buildings that Europeans erect on other islands, but wooden dwellings of all sizes, thatched with palm, or little round-topped huts. Obviously habitations put up by people without building resources at command be-

yond what they could obtain from the woods. But people of intelligence; these were no savage dwellings. Both peninsulas of the island were dotted with them.

It was now the hour of noon, and very warm and still. Orphan Island seemed to sleep. But, as the *Typee* neared its shores, life woke on it. Through their glasses the travellers saw tiny forms stirring, creeping out of the dwellings, gesticulating, pointing out to sea. Soon a crowd was gathered on the shore, showing every evidence of excitement.

"Can you make them out yet?" Mr. Thinkwell inquired of Captain Paul. "Their colour, I mean?"

After a pause and a long look the captain replied, "Whites. No doubt as to that, Mr. Thinkwell. They are surely a white colony, however they may have got there."

"One up to great-grandpapa," said Charles. "This grows interesting. The veritable orphans . . . and their seed, apparently, is as the sands of the sea."

"I told you," said William, "that there would be thousands of them, if any."

"Trade," Mr. Merton murmured. "New ground. Pearls—who knows?"

Mr. Thinkwell was firm. "No exploitation, if you please. No trade, even. I must see these people exactly as they are, as they have developed without outside influence."

"Well, it's your show. Later, perhaps?"

"Later, we shall see."

As they steamed nearer, they could see, through their glasses, the forms and faces of the crowd on the beach. Brown faces, freckled faces, red faces, sallow faces, white faces, rosy faces of children—unmistakable faces of white-skinned people who have been for long exposed to fierce suns. Bare brown legs and

arms; but, except the small children, the Orphans were not naked; they wore garments of brown stuff which, said Mr. Merton, came from the palm tree, or of a lighter and finer material which might, the trader said, be made from bark. The ladies' costumes were skirt-shaped, and fell to the knee, where they were tied in, like the Princess dresses of the eighteen-seventies; the gentlemen wore trousers, also only to the knee. Many of the ladies seemed also adorned with coloured feathers. This much the arrivals could plainly see as their schooner neared the island shores.

They dropped anchor at a gap in the coral reef which was the entrance to the lagoon. Here they lowered a boat, in which the Thinkwells, Captain Paul, and Mr. Merton were rowed in.

Strange it was, thought Charles, very lovely and strange, the voyage through that blue and glassy sea, where swam fish more brightly-hued than rainbows, more oddly shaped than Gothic devils, each dip of the oars carrying the boat nearer that land unvisited for close on seventy years. Strange and lovely and exciting to Charles, and like a poet's dream; strange, exciting, and deeply interesting to Mr. Thinkwell, the sociologist; to William, the youth of science, natural enough, and a new field for exploration and investigation. And to Rosamond this and the whole voyage were like sailing out of an alien, irrelevant world of illusion into reality, to Rosamond it was like coming home. But, seeing so many persons gathered together, Rosamond felt them too many, preferring islands to be solitary. Would the Orphans be bored that they had come, breaking thus into the happy peace of seventy years? Oh, they did not look bored; excited they looked, and pleased and amazed, as they ran out

into the lapping waves and helped to pull the boat ashore.

When they were all got out, and stood in a group on the beach, surrounded by the population, there stepped forward a large, handsome, dignified man with sweeping chestnut whiskers (a fashion affected by most of the elder gentlemen, though the majority of the younger were completely shaved) and addressed them with great politeness.

"Good-day, my dear sirs. Good-day, madam. This is an unexpected and a quite unwonted pleasure. No one has called here for a prodigious great while. Very probably you are missionaries."

CHAPTER V

ON THE BEACH

"Not at all," said Mr. Thinkwell. "Not in the least. We are, in point of fact, a rescue party." He paused on the phrase. *Were* they? Less and less, now he saw the size of this community, he thought so. Still, for the moment he let it pass at that. "We are," he added, "a little delayed, I admit, but I can assure you that no time was lost after we were informed of your predicament."

"Our predicament. . . ." The word was perhaps outside the Orphan vocabulary (which must, after all, have been limited) for they repeated it, puzzled.

"Your plight," Mr. Thinkwell amended. "Your being, I mean, marooned upon this island, all those years ago."

"He is referring," said a bright-faced young woman, languidly fanning herself with a palm fan, "to the beginning of our history, when our grandparents came over."

"Our parents," corrected a man of about fifty.

"Ourselves," quavered a little hook-nosed old lady. "Eight years old, I was, and I recollect it as if it was yesterday. I recollect the shipwreck, and poor Anne-Marie that was drowned. I recollect——"

"There's plenty of us who recollect as well as you, Leah," another old female voice interrupted. "Let the gentlemen talk."

"Very Victorian," murmured Charles, delighted.

"You have quite a community here," said Mr.

Merton, complimenting them. "Quite a little nation. Houses, roads, and all that sort of thing. Very complete."

"Haven't you houses and roads in your country?" asked the young woman who had spoken before, and Mr. Merton laughed loudly.

"That's good; that's quite good, young lady." He was delighted with her, because he saw that she was handsome as well as pert. "Quite good," he said again.

"What *is* your country?" inquired another Orphan. "You will have come a great way to visit us."

"From Great Britain," Mr. Thinkwell said. "The island from which your community originally sailed. Yes, it is a considerable way."

"It is uncommonly civil and obliging of you to have come so far to see us," said the chestnut-whiskered gentleman, who seemed important, like some kind of official, or cabinet minister. "We will do our best to make your visit agreeable. I hope you will stay for some time. You are just in time for the season."

"The season?"

"Oh, we have, twice in the year, a month or so of unusual gaiety and dissipations. Parties, balls, routs, and such affairs. We have a famous time. The ladies are chiefly responsible, I needn't say." He looked roguish, as if he might add "Bless their hearts," like a gentleman out of Thackeray. Rosamond observed that the young woman with the palm looked at him with a kind of cool, tolerant scorn, and inferred that she was his daughter.

"She is beautiful," thought Rosamond. "How beautiful she is. Her eyes shine, and her skin, and she has a red flower over each ear. And pearl earrings. She is like a princess."

The young woman's dark, bright glance met Rosamond's, held it for a moment, with negligent, appraising interest, and passed on to Charles.

"We are fortunate," said Mr. Thinkwell. "It will be very agreeable to see something of your social life."

"I see," said the other gentleman, "that you have a charming young lady in your party. Your daughter, perhaps?"

Mr. Thinkwell agreed. "Indeed," he added, "we ought to introduce ourselves. This is Captain Paul, of the schooner *Typee*; this is Mr. Merton. My own name is Thinkwell, and these are my sons and daughter, Charles, William, and Rosamond."

Several of the more important-looking Orphans bowed with some ceremony, and said, "We are delighted to make your acquaintance. We hope you all do very well."

The chestnut-whiskered gentleman then spoke again, saying that his name was Albert Edward Smith.

"Indeed!" said Mr. Thinkwell. "Smith is perhaps a name frequently to be met with on your island, as on ours."

At this Mr. Smith straightened himself a little more, as, indeed, did several other of the prouder-looking Orphans.

"Frequently, no, sir. Not at all frequently. We are not a large family, we Smiths, but I think we may say we are of some importance. We descend from Miss Charlotte Smith." To the Thinkwells' surprise, at this name all present bowed their heads.

"Then," said Mr. Thinkwell, "*did* she marry the doctor? I thought she would."

"You seem to know something of my mother's and father's affairs, sir," said Mr. Smith, with a grave dignity that became him well.

"A little only. The merest outline. The name, though? It goes down in the female line here?"

"No, sir. Certainly not. That would be an odd notion indeed. But my mother, Miss Charlotte Smith" (again every one inclined) "naturally *her* name goes down."

"Rather than your father's. . . . O'Malley, was it not?"

"My mother preferred that it should be so." Mr. Smith spoke now with some coldness, and the visitors inferred that the memory of Dr. O'Malley was not greatly esteemed on the island.

Mr. Smith changed the subject.

"We must not keep you standing on the beach in this inhospitable manner and in this sun," he said. "You must come, all of you, and have some rest and refreshment. I hope, while you stay, that you will be the guests of myself and some of my friends. I am afraid that my house won't accommodate the whole party. Perhaps you, sir, and your daughter will be my guests. Allow me to present to you Mrs. Albert Smith, my wife. My love!"

Mrs. Albert Smith came forward. She was a large lady, very calm, very fat, and very brown, with a black moustache. She looked Spanish, for she was the daughter of a Spanish orphan, and she looked stupid, for so she was. She was sewing, with a sharp wooden needle, at some garment of fibrous cloth that she carried.

"I was saying, my dear, that we shall be delighted if Mr. and Miss Thinkwell will stay with us during their visit here. Shall we not?"

"Very pleased, I'm sure," said Mrs. Smith, and the visitors learned subsequently that this was a favourite

remark of hers. She was amiable, but lacked initiative.

"Allow me also," continued Mr. Smith, "to present our youngest daughter, Flora. Our home child, for all the others have left the nest."

Miss Flora Smith, the young lady with pearl earrings and a palm fan, inclined her head politely enough to the party. There seemed, however, to be something in her father's speech which annoyed her, for she gave him a coldish glance, then turned away, linking her arm in that of another girl who stood near her.

"Doesn't like her papa," thought Charles. "Expect he talks too much. Puffed up with being a Smith, that's what ails him. And mamma's an ass. I dare say home life in the nest is a bit of a bore. I'm not sure if I like Flora, though; she's stuck up."

"It is most kind of you, sir," Mr. Thinkwell said, "to offer us hospitality. We shall, of course, be delighted to accept."

"Speaking for myself, sir," Captain Paul put in, "I fear I must get back to my ship for the night. I have rather a job crew; don't like leaving them to their own devices too long. What about you, Merton?"

"Oh, I think I shall stop ashore for to-night, anyhow," said Mr. Merton.

William, a downright and simple youth, who had been puzzled for some time, now blurted out to the Orphans in general, "But I say, don't you want to be *rescued*? We came to *rescue* you, you know."

Every one looked at him. After a pause, a voice was heard in undertone: "I said from the first that they were missionaries," and another, "Where is the Reverend? He must talk to them."

A tall, lanky young man stepped forward. Red-haired he was, with high cheekbones and a skin that

was freckled instead of tanned. One expected from him the voice and speech of North Britain, but he spoke without much more of these than was discernible in the other Orphans.

"You are very good, my dear sir"—he thus addressed William—"but we already have religion. We are all baptized members of the Christian church. It is my part to look to that. I am the clergyman here, you see."

William blinked at him stupidly. But Mr. Thinkwell, quicker to understand, put out his hand, explaining.

"A very natural error. Most natural. But my son was not referring to *spiritual* rescue. He meant, do you not desire to be removed from this island and conveyed elsewhere?"

The clergyman bowed.

"Pardon me," he said. "A natural error, as you say. You see, we once had a missionary here. He had escaped from a shipwreck in a small boat, with a black man and woman whom he had brought with him from Africa as Christian exhibits, wherewith to convert the South Sea Islanders. That was near the end of the nineteenth century, before I can remember. My grandfather was then the clergyman here. The missionary was a French Jesuit. He was very anxious to save us all; a most earnest man, one's parents say. He denied the validity of our Orders, preached papal infallibility, and denounced scanty female attire and the "berso veed," as he called it. That is French for not having a great number of children; he spoke French when he was excited. He started our religious dissensions, and made a good deal of trouble, which lasts even now. There is a sect here to-day which denies our Orders and preaches the Pope of Rome."

He seemed to glance at Mrs. Albert Edward Smith, who was placidly sitting on the sand and sewing. Perhaps, though she looked no theologian, her Spanish descent told. . . .

"Unfortunately," continued the clergyman, "that poor missionary perished prematurely, in a no-popery riot, and was afterwards eaten by his black converts. That popery was an error this island was always taught, by Miss Smith." (Again a general bow.)

"What happened to the niggers?" William inquired.

"They and their children are still with us," said Mr. Albert Smith. "They work for members of the Smith family, and are, I am happy to say, now Protestants."

"And from where," inquired Mr. Merton, who knew about things like that, from having been an Anglican missionary, "do your Orders derive, sir?"

"Naturally, from Miss Smith," said the young clergyman, with simplicity.

"Miss Smith?" Mr. Merton smiled. "She ordained the first parson, did she?"

"She ordains all the parsons, sir," said her son, Mr. Albert Smith, with some dignity. "Who else should?"

Mr. Thinkwell was startled.

"You don't mean to say—— Do I infer, then, that *Miss Smith is still living*?"

They all stared at him.

"My dear sir"—Mr. Smith's tone was mildly remonstrative—"you surely did not imagine that she was dead?"

Mr. Thinkwell was embarrassed.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Smith; I had, to tell you the truth, half supposed it to be probable. Your mother must be advanced in years, I think?"

"Ninety-eight," replied Mr. Smith. "We are keeping her birthday in a fortnight. She doesn't, of course, get about very much in these days, but her mind is still active. She attends to all affairs of government herself—with constitutional advice, of course."

A curious murmur—was it of loyalty or otherwise?—rippled among a section of the crowd. Mr. Albert Smith, standing very upright, one hand grasping each chestnut whisker, fixed the populace with a firm and prominent gaze.

William, a patient and persistent boy, interested neither in missionaries, Holy Orders, nor Miss Smith, at this point said, "What I mean is, don't you, all of you, want to leave the island and come away? Because, you see, this is a *desert* island, and you were *cast up* on it." He thought the Orphans did not quite realise their situation.

They all looked at him.

"Come away . . . leave the island . . ." they repeated, in some excitement.

"Why, my boy?" said an elderly lady, interrupting the excitement in a dry voice. "All this gadding about for change of scene—no one thought of it when *I* was young. But I dare say the young people are all for travel, if they get a chance of it. Seeing life, pleasure-seeking, and all that. Miss Smith has always said——"

The old lady was interrupted by a clear young voice.

"To be sure we want to come away. I do, I know. Oh, Lord, I am sure I shall be prodigiously glad to see the world."

Mrs. Albert Edward Smith clicked with her tongue, disapprovingly, thinking really more about her sewing. Mr. Smith said, in his fine, mellow voice, "That will do, Flora. Your views, I think, were not asked." He

then addressed himself to William. "You seem to be proposing, my dear young gentleman, a complete emigration of our population to some other country. A little wholesale, surely. We have, you see, our roots, our family and national life, our means of livelihood, our history and traditions, here on this island, which I observe that you describe as 'desert.' Of course, we know, for we have always been taught so here, that Great Britain, the country from which we originally emigrated, and which you now inhabit, is the world's hub, peculiarly chosen by the Deity as the centre of His beneficent purposes towards His universe. We have, indeed, instructed by Miss Smith"—he raised his palm hat, and looked round to make sure that every one else did the same—"taken Great Britain, her constitution, her customs, and the unrivalled purity of her domestic and social life, for our model in this island colony, as you will observe very soon if you spend any time among us. But we are an independent community, I may say a *principality,* and we have, I think, no desire permanently and as a nation to abandon our island home. Of course a little travel for some of us is another matter, and would be both instructive, beneficial, and entertaining. One ought to see the wider world. What say you, my love?" he inquired of his lady.

"Oh, I," she said placidly. "I am a home-lover, you know, my dear. Travel is all very well for gentlemen; makes a nice change, don't it; but what do we women want with it? That's what your mamma has always said, Bertie. Women's business is in the home."

Mr. Smith indulgently displayed his wife's womanly reply to the audience.

"And yet," said Mr. Thinkwell, "Miss Smith herself

travelled rather far afield, if I may remind you of that."

"Ah." Miss Smith's son's indulgent smile changed to a more reverent expression. "My mother, Mr. Thinkwell, is no ordinary woman. Almost a man's grasp, a man's intelligence and knowledge of affairs. And yet, sir, a womanly woman, if ever there was one."

Charles reflected that Miss Smith sounded much like the late Queen Victoria as viewed by herself and her subjects about the time of the Diamond Jubilee.

"But," resumed Mr. Smith, "we will discuss all these things together later on. We must not be so inhospitable as to keep you standing here. You must all come up to my little residence and partake of refreshment."

At the thought of that, the landing party brightened, particularly Mr. Merton, who, though he did not know much about Dr. O'Malley, knew enough of islands to be sure that, in all these years, the Orphans would have learnt what liquids best to ferment.

Mr. Albert Smith motioned to his fellow islanders, indicating that they were to part and make a way through which the visitors might pass up from the beach.

"My love," he said to his wife, "we will conduct our guest to the Yams. You had better call the servants, and desire them to go on and prepare refreshments."

Mrs. Smith rose, with a sigh of stoutness, and called "Heavenly-Mind! True-Peace! Where in the world have those girls got to? The naughtiest maids any one ever had, upon my word. Oh, there you are, girls. Run up to the Yams and set the table in the veranda with fruit and drinks. Make haste now."

The two young women hurried off. Mr. Thinkwell

mused on the question of class differences and domestic service as developed in small communities, but his comment was merely on the girl's names.

"Heavenly-Mind? True-Peace? Curious names, are they not?"

Mrs. Smith looked as if she did not see anything curious about them or any other names, but Mr. Smith said, "They are taken from a book which was among the few possessions my mother managed to bring with her from the shipwreck. It is called *The Holy War*, by John Bunyan. A good many of our people have named their children out of that book. . . . I trust that no cocoa-nuts will fall on your heads."

They had now entered the woods, leaving the crowd behind them on the beach, and were following a path that led through thickets of luxuriant trees and shrubs. A thousand sweetnesses, like fleeting thoughts, assailed the hot, still, brooding air. In the dense green overhead monkeys chatted brightly, and radiant parrots uttered sharp, staccato cries, while paradise and humming birds flashed brilliant colours on the woody gloom. With soft, continuous thuds cocoa-nuts fell on emerald grass; with squashier sounds the ripe golden bread-fruit slipped softly from over-weighted boughs and tumbled through dark, glossy leaves to the ground. Rosamond picked one up and bit it. It was as good as she had always heard.

"Books!" said Mr. Thinkwell. "I had not thought of that. Have you any other books on the island?"

"My father," said Mr. Smith, in the reserved voice he used for Dr. O'Malley, "had, I believe, when wrecked, one or two books in his pockets, of a humorous nature. Unfortunately they were also, my mother discovered, rather coarse, and she has never let them circulate among us. He also had one in Latin, which

we cannot read, and a story called *Wuthering Heights*, which has always been of great interest to us here. It is the only book we have except for a little volume of my mother's called *Mixing in Society, or Correct Conduct*, a manual of etiquette, which gives us a picture of domestic life in England to-day (and I cannot, by the way, think that it compares very favourably with our island life). *The Holy War* is more fanciful, more of the nature of what my mother calls an *allegory*. We have also a few books of devotion belonging to the French missionary, but, perhaps fortunately, they are in Latin, and therefore cannot be read."

"Miss Smith has no Bible, then," said Mr. Merton.

"No, sir. To her great distress, she did not remember to take that book with her from the ship. But she had such a close acquaintance with it that she was able to bring us all up on its stories, and to supply texts for every sermon that has been preached during our sixty-eight years here."

"You have many sermons?"

"One every Sunday morning, naturally, as well as Christmas Day, Good Friday, the anniversary of our coming to the island, and my mother's birthday. We used to keep also the birthday of Queen Victoria of England, but of late years that has been merged in that of my mother."

"How many parsons?" asked Mr. Merton, rather anxiously. But at the answer he brightened.

"Only one at a time. No more are necessary. Our first clergyman was ordained in 1870; he was an orphan of Scottish origin, and our two subsequent clergy have been his son and grandson. My mother found that the lads of Scottish descent were, as a rule, more apt at theology than the others."

"Church of England?" asked Mr. Merton.

"Ay, indeed. My mother was always very strict on that subject. Her father, you know, was a vicar. Our church here is the Protestant and Reformed Church of England. Certain popish errors have given us a good deal of trouble from the very first," Mr. Smith added coldly, "and they were augmented by the brief visit of the Catholic missionary last century. But we do our best to suppress them." He glanced reprovingly at his wife waddling at his side, but she was not attending.

"Also, we have other heresies. My mother has always said that heresies of all descriptions abound in Great Britain. *Dissenters,* she calls those who hold them. We, too, are not without our dissenters."

"The history," said Mr. Thinkwell, "of your religious life here would be of great interest to me to hear, sometime." For, as a sociologist, he held that in no matter is the trend and character of a society better shown than in its religions. "Have you," he added, atheists, sceptics, and agnostics?"

"Unfortunately," replied Mr. Smith, "and extraordinary and terrible as it must seem, we have always had atheists among us. You would scarcely think it credible that here, in this remote island where we have been so mercifully preserved, there should be found any who doubt the existence of a beneficent and allwise Deity, but so it is. . . . As to the other sects you inquire after, I don't know them."

Mr. Thinkwell perceived that the words sceptic and agnostic had not formed part of the vocabulary imparted by Miss Smith to the orphans.

"Here," said Mr. Smith, "we are."

CHAPTER VI

AT THE YAMS

THEY came out into a clearing, in which stood a fine dwelling built of logs and plastered with mud. It was surrounded by a garden, enclosed from the wood by a palisade, and on the gate was cut "The Yams." Charles noted, without surprise, that no yams appeared to grow on the premises, or even very near.

"My little place," said Mr. Smith, ushering them through the gate. "No palace, as you see, but it suffices for our homely life. We Smiths, though between us we own all the island, are not flashy people."

"How the devil," muttered Charles to Captain Paul, "do they come to own all the island?"

"Doubtless," Captain Paul sardonically murmured, "they obtained it from that source of all temporal and spiritual bounty, Miss Smith."

Mr. Smith conducted them through his garden to his verandahed house. When all the party was within the palisade, he carefully shut and bolted the garden gate.

"Lest others intrude," he said.

And, indeed, the house was now surrounded by a considerable crowd, who had come up from the beach by other paths, and were peering through the palings. As Mr. Smith closed the gate, a tart female voice ejaculated, " 'Pon my soul, Bertie!"

"Aunt Adelaide is here," said Flora, rather maliciously, to her papa. "Dying to come in."

Mr. Smith gave no sign of attention. The tart

female voice exclaimed loudly, through the palisade, "No such thing. Stuff and nonsense, child. I haven't the least desire to talk to our visitors in *this* house. Shouldn't get in a word edgeways. All the same, Bertie, it's pretty impudent the way you've carried 'em off."

The visitors saw, between the rails of the fence, a fine figure of a woman clad in rich skins and feathers and hung with ropes of pearls. A monkey-skin bag jingled on her wrist, and a tiny black monkey peered under her arm. The face above this rich attire was large and red and proud. Obviously one of the caste of Smith, and a great lady on the island. She was seated in a kind of hammock, carried by two West African negroes.

Rosamond looked at her, embarrassed, feeling that their host was not being very courteous to this lady relative of his. The lady caught her eye and nodded to her.

"You seem a nice little thing. Ain't she, Sam?" (She addressed a gentleman at her side.) "My good brother Bertie, because he's the eldest son, pretends he's the only Smith on the island. Don't you believe him. You must all come and see *me* next. I can do you as well as he can, and a trifle better, too. *My* palm wine is flavoured with turtle. . . . Flora, you must bring them round to me later. I want to hear a world of things from them."

Flora nonchalantly nodded.

Mr. Smith meanwhile ushered the guests into his verandah and bade them be seated. The seats were wooden chairs, made comfortable with cushions of brown cocoa-nut cloth stuffed with feathers. They were set round a table laid with fruits and drinks, the latter being served in cocoa-nut goblets. The two

servant girls, Heavenly-Mind and True-Peace, were still setting out these refreshments, assisted by a small black child.

"That will do, Zachary," said Mrs. Smith to this infant. "You can run away now and help cook."

"A negroid child," commented Mr. Thinkwell. "A descendant, I presume, of the black attendants of your missionary."

"Their youngest child," Mr. Smith replied. "They are prolific, the Zacharies."

"That is their name?"

"Yes. They are called Zachary Macaulay. So are all their children. They were understood to say that, where they came from, most of the population bear that name, in memory of some one who was kind to them long ago. My mother says there was a slave-liberator of that name when she was young."

"Interesting," said Mr. Thinkwell.

"But his work was in vain," interpolated Flora, languidly using her fan, "for now these poor Zacharies are slaves again."

"You employ unpaid labour, then?"

"No one pays the Zacharies. They don't expect it," and Mr. Merton said, "Hear, hear," and drained his cocoa-nut.

"The lower orders among ourselves, however," added Mr. Smith, "work for hire."

"The lower orders! You have them, then, even here?"

"I should say so," said Flora.

"Why?" asked Charles, preparing to get sarcastic. "*How* are they lower? When did they become lower?"

Mr. Smith said, "They have always been lower. Ever since our island history began."

"And how," inquired Charles, "did they first show it?"

Mr. Smith combed with his fingers his beautiful whiskers.

"As they show it now, no doubt, by gesture, speech, character, and habits. Naturally there has always been a marked distinction between the descendants of my mother and the descendants of her brood of orphan children."

"Oh, I see. Then the upper classes are all Smiths?"

"Naturally, my dear young sir."

"But the Smiths must have married among the orphans. What was the social position of their issue?"

Issue was another word not taught by Miss Smith. But Mr. Smith, an intelligent man, perceived that it meant children, and replied, "The Smith blood decides the position of any one in whose veins it runs. Naturally no descendant of my mother's—no legitimate descendant, of course"—Mr. Smith interpolated this in a lower tone, glancing at Flora—"could belong to the lower orders."

"And what," asked Charles, "do you give the lower orders for their work?"

"Why, money, to be sure."

"Money?"

"Ay. Our money is in the form of certain shells, and pieces of coral. Yours, I believe, consists of discs of metal."

"But what," asked William, "is the use of money here, "with nothing to buy?"

"Nothing to buy!" Flora smiled derisively.

Mr. Smith said, "Indeed, there is a great deal to buy. You must visit the shopping quarter later. Flora will tell you all about that; she haunts it. And how do you imagine that people obtain their daily

food or clothes without buying them? They do not mostly own the sources of production, as the wealthier classes do. They are not, of course, allowed to rob the fruit trees or steal the game."

"It's as bad as England," William whispered to Rosamond.

"But," said Mr. Smith, "I am doing all the talking. This will never do. We are all eagerness, aren't we, mamma, to hear our visitors' tale of how they first learnt of our existence and decided to discover us."

"Fancy," said Mrs. Smith, who was pressing delicious fruits upon Rosamond.

So Mr. Thinkwell told them the tale of his grandfather the sailor, and of the old letter and chart that had come, after all these years, into his hands.

Mr. Smith nodded at intervals, greatly interested. Flora stared at the narrator with her clear, bright gaze. Meanwhile, Rosamond, eating fruit, stared at Flora, and thought how very handsome she was. Charles thought so too. And Captain Paul and Mr. Merton thought, "If there are many girls as fine as her on the island, I wouldn't mind staying on. . . ."

"Lucky," Flora commented, when Mr. Thinkwell had finished his narration. "Suppose that letter had never reached you. Or suppose you hadn't bothered to start. . . . What *luck*."

"Hardly luck, Flora," said Mr. Smith. "Rather let us call it Divine Arrangement. We know, don't we, my child, that our lives are hidden in His hand, and that all that happens to us is according to His plan."

"Oh, yes, Flora, you know papa has often told you that," Mrs. Smith absently interjected.

Flora seemed to have the modern habit of not taking a great deal of notice of her papa and mamma. She addressed the Thinkwells.

"What did you expect to find here? Were you amazed when you saw us? I'm sure I should have been prodigiously amazed if I had found an island like ours, full of people so odd as we. For I'm sure we *are* odd, aren't we?"

She asked this of Charles, who replied that, in his view, all human creatures were very odd indeed.

"Compared with what?" his father asked him, deriding his lack of precision; but Charles, who thought it no moment for philosophical argument, merely said "Turtles; vegetables; anything," and to Flora, "We had no idea how many of you to expect, of course. You have increased at a good rate."

"As a matter of fact," said William, "they haven't increased so much as one would have expected. I calculated, if you remember, that the first orphans would make twenty pairs, and have, on an average, ten——"

Mr. Smith cleared his throat, and it occurred to Mr. Thinkwell that perhaps young ladies on the island were still Victorian and not supposed to hear calculations based on birth-rates.

Mrs. Smith hastily led the topic along harmless lines by asking Rosamond, "Do you like children?" a question which always made Rosamond puzzle and frown, for to her it meant neither more nor less than if some one were to ask her if she liked grown persons. Being inarticulate, she could not explain her difficulty except by saying, "Some of them." To which Mrs. Smith returned, "They soon know, don't they?"

They soon know! They said that here, too, then, thought Mr. Thinkwell. Strange, how these remarkable phrases grow up everywhere the same, springing, it seems, out of the fatuity of the human mind. Or had Miss Smith and the Scottish nurse said it before

the wreck, and passed it down? They soon know! Perhaps they also said on Orphan Island that the world was small, that boys would be boys, that we've only one life, haven't we.

William meanwhile was still pursuing his calculations. "How many are there actually on the island now?" he asked, and Mr. Smith told him one thousand and twenty-five, of whom five hundred and ninety-three were children under fifteen.

"Oh, I see," said William. "That's on the basis of an average of about five children to each pair, taking four generations and given approximate equality of sexes, and a few deaths. I suppose," he added, "that you don't have many celibates. Bachelors, I mean, and spinsters, as we have in England."

"Oh, a few. Not many, certainly."

"Poor things," Mrs. Smith said kindly. "Seems quite against nature, don't it. People ought to get married, to be sure they ought. It's only right. We were made for that, after all, weren't we?"

"In consequence of that, anyhow," Mr. Thinkwell amended. "What we were made *for* seems a doubtful question. I dare say you are no nearer answering it on Orphan Island than we in our hemisphere."

Charles thought they were probably a good deal nearer, and, to avert a discussion that might prove wearisome and could scarcely be very fruitful, he begged Mr. Smith to relate to them something of the history of the island community during the past sixty-eight years, and to give them some idea of its social constitution, which, he said, must be a very interesting story. At this request, Miss Flora yawned, and got up to go.

"That," she murmured, as she passed Charles, "is indeed asking for it."

Mr. Smith looked benignantly on the young inquirer, and said, "You are very right, sir. The history and development of our community is of immense and remarkable interest, and I shall have great pleasure in unfolding something of it in the near future. But just now is not the moment, for we have sat here long enough. If you are all refreshed, we will take a turn on the beach and read the day's news, and then I shall endeavour to arrange an audience for you with Miss Smith." He inclined his head at the name, as usual, and the visitors politely did the same.

"She receives people, then?" Captain Paul said.

"Oh, yes; in moderation. Her mind is still, at intervals, vigorous, and she is by no means an invalid. A wonderful grasp of affairs. Of course, at ninety-eight, she has a few *fancies*. . . ."

Rosamond, who at nineteen had more than a few of these, wondered in what direction Miss Smith's fancy strayed. Perhaps she imagined Orphan Island full of elves . . . perhaps, in her view, the turtles and the shell fish chatted together with mermaids on the beach . . . Oh, yes, even at ninety-eight one would have retained a few fancies, on such an isle as this.

"But first," resumed Mr. Smith, "we will go and read the evening news on the shore, if you are agreeable. It comes out at about this hour."

"My God," Mr. Merton commented. "The local press."

"My love, perhaps you would prefer not to come out again in the heat," said Mr. Smith to Mrs. Smith, and Mrs. Smith agreed that she would prefer a nap. The visitors bade her good-bye for the present, thanking her for her kindness and hospitality.

"Delicious drinks you gave us, madam," said Mr. Merton, and she smiled, pleased, and said, "The

recipes are mostly from Mr. Smith's papa. Such a very clever man at making drinks. A doctor, you see. Good-bye, sir; good-bye, my dear. Very pleased, I'm sure. We don't often see such a party here; it makes a nice change. We shall meet again later on. The drink makes one sleepy, don't it. Particularly on top of the heat. I shall have a good nap. Don't let Mr. Smith tire you out, walking round. I'm sure there'll be plenty of time for you to see everything later on. Good-bye."

CHAPTER VII

THE PRESS

THE party went through the garden out into the wood, where a crowd of islanders stood patiently waiting for them to come. When they appeared a murmur of interest rippled among the crowd. Mothers lifted up their children to see the sight; young persons giggled to one another because of the strangers' unconventional attire.

Mr. Smith raised a firm hand, motioning them all back.

"No crowding," he commanded. "I am conducting our guests to the shore, to see the news. Make way, if you please."

The crowd followed them down to the shore; perhaps they all wanted to see the news.

Rosamond, walking a little behind the rest, looked round for Flora, and saw her slipping away, her arm in a girl friend's. Rosamond had a little envious pang. If she had been Flora's friend! But what was she, to be the friend of radiant Flora? Flora would never do more than fling her an occasional word or glance, and pass on to her own friends. To be loved by Flora —what felicity! But did Flora, loved, surely, by all, really love any one? Was it in Flora's heart to love?

They came down out of the wood on to the shore again, and on the smooth, damp stretch of sand near the sea's edge two men were busily writing with sharp sticks, at the dictation of a third, who threw a sen-

tence or phrase now at one, now at the other. What was already written was large and legible, in clear round letters, and laid out in separate paragraphs, each with its own heading.

"Amazing Occurrence this Afternoon," the largest paragraph was headed. "Landing of Strangers." It went on, "Early this afternoon a more amazing event occurred than has ever before been known in our country. A large vessel was seen on the horizon, and was observed to be approaching our shores. When it was arrived at the reef, it stopped, and a boat put forth from it, containing several persons, who presently landed on the island. They proved to be a party of six, a Mr. Thinkwell, his daughter and two sons, a Captain Paul, who owned the ship, and a Mr. Merton. Great excitement was naturally caused by this unprecedented event, and there were amazing scenes as most of the population assembled on the shore to watch the landing and to inspect the newcomers, who were dressed in some white material. The young lady of the party wore a thin white gown and a white hat, and had fair hair cut short on the neck after our fashion of fifteen years ago or so. It was thought at first that they must be missionaries, but it was gathered that this was not the case, but that they were a party who had sailed from England with the object of removing us from the island, having learnt of our whereabouts in some manner as yet unknown to the press, who have not yet had an opportunity of interviewing any of the party. The keenest interest is felt in the newcomers, who were shortly conducted by Mr. Albert Edward Smith to his house, the Yams, for refreshment. The party was followed up to the house by a considerable crowd, among whom were many well-dressed women."

Parallel with this column, there were other items of news—a paragraph on the weather, reports of the convictions of various persons arrested for trespassing or theft, and, in a prominent position and large letters, "Health of Miss Smith. Miss Smith has to-day been feeling the heat a little, and has not yet been out. Doctor Brown reports, however, that she is taking her meals well and that there is no cause for anxiety." Next to this was "Resumed Trial of True-Heart Jenkins. Amazing Statements. The trial of True-Heart Jenkins for the murder of her husband by poison berries was resumed this morning. There were many well-dressed women present. The prisoner was smartly dressed in bark, with broad hat of plaited palm trimmed with pink feathers, and white coral necklace and ear-rings. Testimony was given by Hindley Green, aged eight, whom Jenkins had desired to pick the berries for her a few days before her husband's death. Jenkins told the boy that the berries were for a hat wreath. Testimony was given by Sally Wilson, the girl who worked for Jenkins, that the berries had been crushed up for jam. Doctor Brown stated that Adolphus Jenkins had certainly died of the jam. Testimony was given by many witnesses that prisoner and deceased had not lived in harmony of late. The jury gave a verdict of guilty, and the judge (Mr. James Smith) sentenced the unfortunate and misguided female to be drowned, which will be done on Monday morning."

"A most unfortunate incident," Mr. Albert Smith commented.

"So," said Mr. Thinkwell, "you have trial by jury here—that odd old Saxon custom."

"To be sure we have, my dear sir. My mother

instructed us from the first in British institutions. We have them all."

"Did his mother instruct them in journalism too?" Charles whispered. "The amazing scenes, the well-dressed women, and all the rest of it? Or did it just grow? After all, why not here as well as with us?"

"It's a natural enough style," said Mr. Merton, for so, indeed, it seemed to him. "Nothing odd about that. How else should one report news?"

William prodded Charles with his elbow. "Listen to this, Charles. Charles, we must listen to this."

The gentleman dictating the news, a small, plump, globular person with a brick-red face and a green cigar in his mouth, was in the middle of the Political Intelligence. This was too complicated for the strangers wholly to grasp. It seemed that there was trouble in Hibernia—("Hibernia?" queried Mr. Thinkwell. Mr. Smith indicated the adjacent and smaller peninsula of the island. "My father named it that," he said. "We have had a good deal of trouble with it from time to time. Malcontents have always made it their abode; particularly since the insurrection of 1910. The insurrectionists were put down, of course, but there is still a sad amount of disloyalty.")—Trouble, then, in Hibernia; and trouble, too, in politics; a great fracas, in fact, in Parliament, between one party and another. It seemed that one party was in favour of the sending forth of boats on a voyage of exploration, and the other parties were not.

"That has always been in dispute among us," said Mr. Smith. "From time to time such an expedition has gone forth, but has never got far. We have no adequate equipment for such adventures. But there has always been a Forward Party, in favour of that and

other wild schemes. Fortunately, they have never been in power."

Mr. Thinkwell signed to him, donnishly, with his hand, to stop talking, for he desired to listen to the news. It seemed that there had been more trouble still, made by a group of discontented people who appeared to be holding meetings with a view to subverting the constitution and redistributing the land.

"Foolish fellows," said Mr. Smith, and his stern, cold expression was repeated on the faces of a good many of those who stood by. "Always some mad scheme. They chatter like the monkeys, and are for ever quarrelling with the laws of God and man. The land, of course, all belongs to Us. We rent it out and keep it well cultivated, for the good of the community."

"I see you are good Tories here," said Mr. Thinkwell.

"Tories? That is the good political party in Great Britain, isn't it? My mother has told us——"

"As to good—well, that's a matter of taste. I suppose they are no worse than any other party, and not even, I dare say, more stupid."

"Ah. Your political parties are all like that, then—on a low level."

"They are human, sir. Yours too, no doubt."

"With us," said Mr. Albert Edward Smith, "there is, on every question, a right side and a wrong. Some of us are habitually on one side, some on the other. It is a question, largely, of birth and breeding. Partly, also, of course, of age, wisdom, and experience. We have our young hot-heads, even among Ourselves." His glance fell on a group of young people standing a little way off, among whom was his daughter Flora and a youth sufficiently like her in feature to be supposed by Mr. Thinkwell to be her brother.

The news editor was still dictating. He had got now to social and personal news, and interesting items of information about this person and that were announced and written down. Two persons had been married; another pair had had twins; some one else had been devoured by a shark; Mr. and Mrs. Smith-Carter had given a reception at which many elegantly dressed persons had been present and the food had been delicious. Finally, "Mr. Heathcliff Smith, addressing an audience this morning on the land question, said . . ."

Mr. Albert Edward Smith stepped forward, with raised hand. "That will do. Erase, if you please."

The reporter erased; the dictator cleared his throat and changed the subject. He said instead, "Girl's amazing leap from tree saves young monkey's life."

"Mussolini," said Charles Thinkwell, addressing Mr. Smith.

"I beg your pardon?" said Mr. Smith.

"I was merely noting," said Charles, "that your methods with the press resemble those of the present ruler of Italy."

Mr. Smith inclined his head, not displeased. But gloom still lay on his brow, following the reference to Mr. Heathcliff Smith.

It seemed to Rosamond, who was looking often at the group of young people round Flora, that the youth who must be her brother was sneering a little, and looking defiantly towards his father. Perhaps that was Mr. Heathcliff Smith.

Rosamond wished that she could go up to this group and ask them to show her round the island. She was tired of this stupid newspaper, which was hardly more amusing than all the stupid newspapers at home.

"Very funny," Captain Paul was saying. "Damn funny, isn't it. Just like the silly things *our* papers

say. Damn amusing." He, like Mr. Merton, had drunk just enough fermented liquor.

Rosamond, hearing him speak, remembered that only that morning she had felt towards him a thrilling kind of admiration and hero-worship, that had made her excited when he spoke to her or looked at her. Now the thrill was abated, swooned away, as it were, on the languishing island air. Was it merely that, on the island, he was no longer the captain, the chief? In that case, she thought, in that case she should have transferred her admiration to Mr. Albert Smith—or to the unseen Miss Smith lurking in the background. Or was it rather that, once you had seen Flora Smith, no one else counted very much? Such grace was hers, such mocking beauty and such pride . . . a mountain panther could not touch her for the kind of wild, disdainful elegance she had.

CHAPTER VIII

TO BALMORAL

"ENOUGH news for this afternoon, I think," said Mr. Smith. "The hour is approaching when Miss Smith, after her afternoon sleep, Receives. I will go up to Balmoral now and see if I can secure an audience for you. She will, I know, be profoundly interested in the news of your arrival. My mother, of course, unlike the rest of us, lived to maturity in Great Britain before she came here, and recollects it perfectly."

"Miss Smith ain't the only one to do *that*." The quavering voice of the little old Jewess spoke. "I recollect London perfectly. The Mile End Road, we called it, where we lived. Eight years old, I was, when they took me to the Orphanage, and I recollect it as if it was yesterday. Going shopping for my muvver—stalls with red meat all along the street on market nights, all lit up. . . . It might be yesterday. And I recollect the shipwreck, and poor Anne-Marie that was drowned, and the doctor that the shark ate up the day I was married to Jacob. How the doctor made us laugh and drink and dance, and taught us bits of Latin in his cups, and (when he'd had one more) about the pope . . . and how Miss Smith wouldn't have it. . . ."

Mr. Smith lifted his hand for silence, not caring for these old-time recollections of his parents.

"That is enough, Leah. Enough." He turned to the visitors. "If you will accompany me to Miss

Smith's residence, I will inquire whether she can receive you forthwith."

They climbed up from the beach again, followed by inquisitive crowds, among whom were many well-dressed women. Two of these walked close at Rosamond's side, inspecting her with interest, fingering her white cotton frock.

"She wears a lot of clothes," said one to the other. "She has something under this. She must be very hot. She wears clothes even on her legs and feet. Why do you wear clothes on your legs and feet, Rosamond?" (for so they had heard her called).

"I don't know," said Rosamond. "People do, where I come from. It's stupid."

"Is it very cold, where you come from?"

"Very, very cold. Nearly always."

"But it isn't cold here. Here you needn't wear so many clothes."

"I shan't," said Rosamond.

"Why do you wear your hair short instead of parted and coiled over your ears? It's not been the fashion here for—oh, ever so many years. Only elderly ladies do it."

"I always have. It's common, in England."

"She is very white," they said. "Not brown or red, like us. But her face is pink—she has freckles on her nose. Why are you so white, Rosamond?"

"I suppose because the sun doesn't shine much where I have lived."

"Why don't the sun shine?"

"I don't know. You'd better ask William. He does science. . . . I mean, he knows about things like that."

"William? That's the broad, young one, who stops and looks for things on the ground. He's not so white as you; and he has more freckles. Charles is

white—whiter than you. We think Charles is vastly handsome."

"Perhaps," said Rosamond indifferently.

"And Paul is handsome too. Merton not so much; we think he perhaps drinks a prodigious lot of fermented juice. Are they married, Merton and Paul and Charles and William? Are *you* married?"

"Not Charles and William and me. I don't know about Mr. Merton and Captain Paul. I dare say they are."

"Are you Smith?"

"Smith?"

"Yes. Have you a Smith descent? Are you upper class? *We* are Smith. In the female line. Our name is Macbean. Miss Smith is our great-grandmamma."

"Well, we are not descended from Miss Smith. Of course not."

"No, of course not. But you must be Smith—upper class—in your own country? We can see you're not Orphan."

"I don't think we are specially upper class. Just ordinary, I suppose."

"Aren't you rich, then?"

"Oh, yes, we are rich."

The Macbean young ladies did not know how unusual an answer, how unusual a belief, this was. Rosamond knew that University dons have more money than the majority of human beings.

"What does your papa do?"

"He gives lectures. He sets examination papers. He writes books. He reads, and finds things out."

"Oh, a teacher. They are not Smith, usually." Their opinion of Rosamond's social position seemed to fall a little. Its fall gave them a new frankness about

their own. The younger dropped her voice, and blushed.

"We are Smith, as we said. But our mamma did not get married to our papa, so Miss Smith cast her out, and we aren't accepted in good society. We count as Orphan."

The elder Miss Macbean, scarlet cheeked, nudged the younger angrily. "Hush, Marah. Talking like that! Mamma will whip you if I tell her. What will Rosamond think of us? We've no business to *know* about things of that kind, you know we haven't. I'm sure Rosamond don't. Young ladies in England don't ever. Do they, Rosamond?"

"Things of that kind?"

"Oh, acting as if you were married when you are not . . . all that."

"Oh, yes," said Rosamond, surprised. "Of course we know about that. Why not?"

"But you don't *speak* of it in England, do you? Not young ladies?"

"Why yes, I suppose so. We speak of anything we like . . . anything we do."

Two pairs of round, prominent blue eyes gazed at her, shocked. Decidedly, Rosamond could not be Smith in her own country. She had none of the Smith outlook, but a more than Orphan commonness.

"Well," said the elder Miss Macbean firmly, *"we don't."*

Between them seventy years seemed to yawn, and neither understood.

"I wonder what great-grandmamma will think of you," said the younger girl. "She is very particular indeed. She won't even see us, because of—you know. She made the Reverend christen us Shameless and Marah. Marah means not nice, you know. And it

was all her fault, because she wouldn't let the Reverend marry papa and mamma."

"Why wouldn't she?"

"Well, you see, mamma was Smith, and papa was very low born. Papa's work is to spear fish and sell them. That is not Smith. So mamma mightn't marry him, and so she and papa did without." The four round, shocked eyes were turned again on Rosamond's face, to see if she was not shocked too.

At this point Mr. Smith, who was walking ahead with the other gentlemen, turned about and looked at Rosamond and her companions. Wrath clouded his fine, high brow. He struck his hands twice together.

"Clear off, you girls. Don't let me find you annoying that young lady again, or I will have you well beaten. Off, I say!"

The Miss Macbeans scuttled away. Charles laughed.

"Autocracy in working," he observed.

"I am sorry you have been troubled," said Mr. Smith kindly, like a telephone operator, to Rosamond. "I am afraid we have a good number of undesirable characters here, who will pester you if they get the chance. Those girls are not quite the type with which your papa would desire you to associate."

Mr. Thinkwell gave his spasmodic grin.

"Nothing to do with me," he said. "Parental surveillance went out, you know, long before the twentieth century came in. Rosamond chooses her own friends, as I choose mine."

"Odd!" commented Mr. Smith, looking at him curiously. "Are you not afraid that she may get—er—undesirably entangled?"

"Entangled, sir? I presume she is entangled. We all are. Life is entangled. Who is to help that?"

"Well," said Mr. Smith, unable, presumably, to reply to this inquiry, "here we are at Balmoral." A prim, neat residence was before them, standing in a grove of palms. "If you will kindly wait here, I will go in and inquire if my mother will receive you. I must first relate to her, in a gradual manner, so as not to startle her, something of your story."

He entered through the gate of Balmoral.

"Balmoral! Damned if the old lady doesn't fancy herself old Victoria," said Mr. Merton rudely.

"Well," said Charles, "she does sound awfully like her."

"I don't know why we should all have to see her," William grumbled. "I'd rather explore the island. Rosamond would too, wouldn't you, Rosamond?"

"Yes."

"Plenty of time for that," said Mr. Thinkwell. "Personally, I have a good deal of curiosity to see Miss Smith. From all account she must be a very remarkable old lady."

Presently Mr. Smith reappeared, and said, "Miss Smith will now receive you. A word on the procedure. One by one you will advance and kiss her hand. You will then stand while she addresses you, unless she desires you to be seated, which, however, I must warn you, is by no means a probable occurrence. I must ask you to recollect, gentlemen, that Miss Smith is very old, and naturally becomes annoyed if not treated with the respect due to her position. She is, of course, the sovereign of our island, and has grown increasingly apt, as the years have passed, to, if I may say so, identify herself with the sovereign of yours, your noble Queen Victoria."

"A historic figure," Mr. Thinkwell said, "but no

longer a contemporary one. Miss Smith has outlived her."

"You must not tell her so," Mr. Smith continued. "Indeed, she would not believe you if you did. In brief, gentlemen, my mamma is more than half persuaded that she *is* Queen Victoria. You see, during all her life in England she had the greatest admiration for that good queen."

"It was not unshared," said Mr. Thinkwell. "Though I fear it is now a little waned. The kings and queens of English history have been apt to inspire a loyalty strictly contemporaneous."

"Be that as it may," said Mr. Smith, waving the unfamiliar word away with his hand, as was his wont; "be that as it may, the loyalty inspired by, and, I may say, *expected* by, Miss Smith, is by no means of such a moderate or partial character. She commands the obedient respect of *all* right-thinking members of our community. I admit that there *is* a disloyal section, which has given trouble, but they are scarcely worthy to be considered. . . . Another point, Mr. Thinkwell. You must be prepared for a certain element of *indignation* in Miss Smith's attitude. She deeply felt the ungrateful and callous behaviour of the cowardly men who left her and her helpless charges in the lurch and among whom was your grandfather, and she is inclined now to think that over much time has elapsed between then and the organisation of the rescue party. You must not be surprised, therefore, if she should express to you a little natural resentment."

"I am very seldom surprised," said Mr. Thinkwell, "and Miss Smith could not, I imagine, surprise me more than she has already done. As to resentment, a certain amount of that is very natural. My grandfather and his fellow sailors behaved like the callous

scoundrels they doubtless were. I may say, however, that I do not consider myself to blame, in any way."

"Certainly not, sir. But old ladies, as you no doubt know. . . . By the way, there is also, of course, in attendance on Miss Smith, old Jean, the nurse."

"What! She is alive, too! Your climate here must be healthy indeed. She must be over ninety also, no doubt?"

"Jean has never mentioned her precise age. But she has always maintained that she is a few years younger than Miss Smith. She must certainly, however, be some years over ninety. She is greatly delighted at the news of your landing, and is all excitement, talking of seeing Aberdeen again. Jean has never, I may say, settled down here. She brought us all up on tales of Scotland, in spite of Miss Smith, who decreed that, since our Creator (who, she says, moves in a mysterious way) had, in His inscrutable wisdom, seen fit to place us here, here we were to be content."

"*I* should be content all right in Miss Smith's position," Charles murmured.

A loud and repeated knocking, as with a stick on the floor, was heard from the interior of Balmoral, and Mr. Smith started.

"Mamma grows impatient. We must delay no more." He led the way into the house, only stopping once more just outside the door to say "Speak loudly. She is rather deaf."

CHAPTER IX

MISS SMITH

THE inside of Balmoral was stuffy and dark, and smelt of fermented liquor. Miss Smith, it seemed, a true mid-Victorian, did not care for open windows. The Balmoral windows were blinded with curtains of plaited palm, that kept out the sun and sultry wind. The rough-hewn chairs stood straight and prim. On their seats were feather-stuffed cushions, and over the back of each was laid an antimacassar of plaited leaves. In the middle of the room stood a round table, on which were some cocoa-nut cups full of drink, and some worn books, tied about with string. In the largest and most commodious of the chairs sat a short-ish, stout old lady. She was dressed in a costume of black-dyed bark cloth, which came up to her throat and down to her feet in a full, crinoline-like sweep. Her face was a rich burnt-sienna red, cut with a thousand wrinkles; she had still some teeth, and she peered at the strangers with a pair of small, sharp, astonishingly blue eyes.

At her side sat another old woman, larger of stature, bony, grim-faced. Both the old ladies wore over their thin white hair head-dresses of plaited leaves.

Mr. Albert Smith ushered in the visitors, one by one. He introduced them. "Mr. Thinkwell. Miss Rosamond Thinkwell. Mr. Charles and Mr. William Thinkwell. Captain Paul. Mr. Merton," and as he mentioned their names, each bowed before Miss Smith and kissed the small, stout, gouty red hand.

"So," said Miss Smith, and her ancient voice grated

like sawn wood, "so the rascal Thinkwell and the other rogues got to safety, did they. We had supposed that they had met the death they deserved."

"They have doubtless all met it by now, ma'am," said Mr. Thinkwell loudly.

"Dead, are they? Dead and gone to judgment?" said Miss Smith, with satisfaction. "Well, when the Books are opened, theirs won't make pretty reading. . . . We recollect the fellow Thinkwell well. A sad, ugly scoundrel. It was he hit the doctor on the head and left him stunned. Your grandpapa, eh, young man?"

"I fear so, ma'am," Mr. Thinkwell admitted.

"I'm sorry for you; you've bad, common blood in you."

"I'm sure of it. But then, one way or another, we all have."

Miss Smith glared at him under lifted brows. Then she struck the floor with her stick.

"Speak for yourself, Thinkwell; speak for yourself: You needn't insult *our* royal ancestors, the kings and queens of England."

"Hoots, ma'am," broke in the high Scottish voice of Jean, "the man only means we're all from Adam, not to mention Eve."

Miss Smith accepted this with a nod, and took a drink.

"True, Jean. To be sure there was Adam. Very true. We are all born sinners. But the sailor Thinkwell and his friends exceeded the bounds of normal human transgression. . . . Upon my word, sir, you've been some time about this business. No doubt you and your grandpapa thought there was no hurry."

"My grandfather," said Mr. Thinkwell, "certainly does appear to have been of that opinion. He waited his time. As to myself, I only heard the story last

June, and started as soon as might be after that, though I can't say I expected to find any life still on the island."

"And well you might not expect it; well you might not. The uncovenanted mercies of Providence were marvellously extended to us"—Miss Smith had another pull at the cocoa-nut—"doubtless for a wise purpose. We were a remnant saved as by fire, in order that we might bring up all those innocent children unspotted by the world. Though even here sin has crept in, like the serpent into Eden. . . . Our people ain't what they were once. This is an age of sensationalism, of lawlessness, of seeking always after some new thing. Is that the case in England too?"

"I have not observed it," said Mr. Thinkwell precisely, "more than in other ages. The qualities you mention are probably general characteristics of the human race."

He had forgotten to speak up, and Miss Smith said "Race! Ay, indeed. Always a mad race after excitement. And the women are worse than the men. They have forgotten the proprieties of their sex, and go gallivanting about with dye on their hair and vermillion from the shell-fish on their faces, and nothing at all on their arms and legs, dancing like light women and drinking like the fish in the deep. . . . But we have always set our face against such things. Have we not, Bertie? We always refuse to receive immodest females. It's our Rule. Ain't it, Bertie?"

"Certainly, mamma. And very proper too."

"Of course it's very proper. We didn't ask your opinion as to that, Bertie. Keep your views till they are asked for, my boy."

"I beg your pardon, mamma."

"Don't interrupt me, Bertie. We were talking to

Thinkwell's grandson. Where were we? What were we speaking of, Thinkwell?"

"You were mentioning the degeneracy of the age, madam."

"Oh, ay, we were. So it is degenerate, sadly; but that'll keep. Now to business." Miss Smith refreshed herself again. "We suffer amazingly in our digestion," she explained. "Pains, and what not. The doctor has prescribed this fruit juice as a remedy. Plain fruit juice it is—nothing else. We have to keep it constantly on draught, or the consequences might be serious. Ain't it so, Jean?"

Jean emitted a sound between a grunt and a snort, and tightened her old mouth.

"Business," Miss Smith repeated vaguely. "Now to business. Ay. . . . You have a ship here, I understand. Is it a large ship? A liner?"

"No, ma'am. A small trading schooner only."

Miss Smith nodded. She looked not ill-pleased. "How many will it hold?"

Captain Paul said, "Not more than a dozen besides the crew."

"You must understand, Miss Smith," Mr. Thinkwell explained, "that this was merely planned as a voyage of investigation. The odds were, in my opinion, very strong indeed that no survivor of the unfortunate party referred to by my grandfather would be found on this island, even should we discover it. I merely came to find out. Of course now, things being as they are, suitable transport can, I have no doubt, be provided to convey away such of your party as may desire to leave the island; even, if they should be so unwise, the entire population."

"Stuff and nonsense, sir." Miss Smith spoke sharply, irritably. She took another drink, set the empty shell

down smartly on the table, and wiped her lips with her hand.

"Stuff and nonsense, Thinkwell. Why should the whole population of this island suddenly take it into their heads to emigrate? Does the whole population of Great Britain desire to leave it?"

"I believe not." Mr. Thinkwell laughed, as at a good joke. This fuddled and amusing old lady was sound enough in some of her views. "No. I believe not."

"Well, then, why should our people? The Orphans are very well as they are. Let 'em be, and don't go putting notions into their heads. They're happy enough, and why shouldn't they be? Could they be better off, or better cared for, or better governed? Haven't they all the fruits of the earth provided for them by the good God to live on, besides birds and beasts and fishes? Haven't they law and liberty and a good parliamentary constitution? What more do they want? To see the world, I suppose. But, as we've always told 'em, and instructed our clergy to tell 'em, the world's a wicked fair, in which they'd soon lose their souls. Not but that it ain't bad enough here; oh, ay, they're worldly enough, the Orphans, to be sure. The plain truth is, Thinkwell, that they're not *fit* for the larger world. They'd lose their heads in it and play the fool. After all, what stock do they come from? Orphans, picked from the gutter—no breeding among the lot of 'em. They're well enough so long as there's a firm hand over 'em. Haven't we arranged everything for 'em ourself—named 'em, taught 'em, punished 'em, married 'em, made their laws and constitution, and given 'em their livelihood? Haven't we minded 'em, Bertie?"

"Indeed you have, mamma."

Miss Smith nodded, with pursed lips.

"They're very well as they are, the Orphans," she said. "They'd be homesick in a month if you moved 'em. . . . But see here, Thinkwell. There *are* those here that are of different stock, fit to move in wider society and take part in the affairs of the world. There are the Smiths, Thinkwell."

"To be sure there are," Mr. Thinkwell agreed.

"Good blood." Miss Smith stared at him with fierce blue eyes. "Royal blood. A race apart. Ten children we had"—one gathered that this was, strictly, the royal we, and that Dr. O'Malley's share in the work had been, very properly, consigned to oblivion—"and all of 'em married and had young ones, and the young ones had young in their turn, and so on. . . . Upon my word, I forget how far that business has gone by now. How far has it gone, Bertie?"

"You have great-great-grandchildren, mamma."

"Ay, to be sure we have. To be sure. Not through Bertie here, you know; Bertie married late, and his children have only just now grown up and married. Bertie was our eldest son, but not our eldest child. That was Caroline. . . . She's dead. . . . Ain't poor Caroline dead, Bertie?"

"Yes, mamma. Twenty years ago, you recollect."

"Ay, poor Carrie. Our eldest. Born, if I recollect rightly, in '57. Poor girl, she was always wild. Carrotty hair, and picked up bad habits and naughty Latin expressions. I could never think," said Miss Smith firmly, "where she got 'em from. . . . Always a wild girl, Carrie. Fast. Set a bad example to the Orphans. Married beneath her . . . but then they all did that; no one else to marry, in those days. Cain and Abel married their sisters, to be sure, but that was in the Scriptures; can't be done now. It don't matter;

Smith blood tells, whatever riff-raff it's mixed with. All our children and grandchildren are Smith. Eh, Bertie?"

"Practically all, mamma." Bertie tugged at his whisker, looking momentarily confused, and the snub, freckled faces of the Miss Macbeans crossed the scene, embarrassing everyone but Miss Smith.

"Practically all," she repeated, and nodded, a satisfied ancestress brooding over her progeny. "How many descendants have we, Bertie?"

"Two hundred and fifty-eight, mamma, at the census last month, and four more little ones since then. Two hundred and sixty-two altogether."

"Two hundred and sixty-two. Our ten have done well. Like the talents that weren't in the napkin. Eh, Thinkwell?"

"They certainly," said Thinkwell, a precise answerer, "seem to have had a fairly large allowance of descendants apiece, if that is well-doing."

"Supposing," William calculated aloud, "that the first lot had five each, that would make fifty. And suppose each of them had——" Charles nudged him, and he subsided into mental arithmetic, moving his lips.

"Our family has done well," Miss Smith repeated. "But, even so, you perceive that they form but a small proportion of the whole community. Gentle blood is vastly in the minority on our island. A matter of over a thousand, and only two hundred and sixty-two Smiths."

"How," asked William loudly (he was never shy when doing sums), "do the husbands and wives of Smiths count?"

Miss Smith turned on the youth her sharp blue stare.

"They don't count," she returned, with a snap.

Mr. Albert Smith seemed to deprecate this, with a remonstrating smile and shrug.

"My dear mamma!" He turned to the visitors. "You have touched on an old point of difference," he told them, in a low voice. "Of course, in all the interests of family life—the sanctity of the home, and all that—husbands and wives must and do rank (approximately, I don't say exactly) as social equals. Otherwise one would have the strange anomaly of children ranking above their parents. It has, in point of fact, always been our social principle that to marry Smith is to become (approximately) Smith. But my mother, and more especially since she is getting old, has made a little trouble on this point. It would, I think, be as well not to pursue the topic."

"Bertie," said Miss Smith sharply, "don't mutter. It's bad manners. We've told you before, often. What are you talking to Thinkwell about?"

"Only statistics, mamma. Our guests are curious about the number of our population."

"Well, that'll do. You can leave the talk to us. When we want you to join in, we'll let you know. . . . So you see, Thinkwell, the number of our upper classes is comparatively small. The rest are the working classes, and the tradespeople, and so on. The lower and lower middle classes. What we call here Orphan. Troublesome people, usually. Get ideas above their station; had a lot o' trouble with them, eh, Bertie?"

"A great deal, mamma."

"You see," Miss Smith went on, "we're a free nation——"

"Most unusual," Mr. Thinkwell commented. "You have no laws, then?"

"Laws? Bless my soul, yes; any number. We're a law-abiding nation, but free; constitutional; the only island besides Great Britain which holds sacred the name liberty."

"Your island has the advantage of Great Britain, ma'am. We have never gone in for liberty."

"Oh, Lord, Thinkwell, you've not learnt history. Didn't they teach you Magna Carta and Habeas Corpus and the glorious Revolution, and all the rest of it? When we were a girl in England, we were taught that Great Britain was the home of liberty."

"*I* learnt that, too, at the Perse," put in Rosamond, speaking for the first time, in her small deep voice.

Mr. Thinkwell passed it up to Miss Smith.

"My daughter says that she, too, was taught that at school. I am surprised that the tradition still lingers. Like many other things that are taught the young, it has no foundation in fact. We have never (with all our follies) been so foolish or so reckless as to go in for liberty in Great Britain. I have never heard of a country which did so."

"Well, well." Miss Smith had not quite followed; she was ninety-eight, and did not concentrate. "Liberty," she said again. "Liberty. And duty. . . . I learnt some verses when I was a girl . . . how did they go?

> "The fair twin sisters, see them stand,
> Tum tum ti tum, hand clasped in hand. . . .

How does it go, child?" She poked Rosamond with her stick. But Rosamond had not learnt that at the Perse, and was dumb.

"The fair twin sisters," Miss Smith repeated. "Liberty and duty, you know." She drank deeply, possibly to toast them. "Hand in hand," she muttered, setting down the shell. "That's the stuff. . . . There's another poem too, on liberty, by Dr. Akenside, which I used to recite when I was a girl. I taught it to all

the children—say it, Bertie. Begin at 'England's ancient Barons, clad in arms.' "

Mr. Albert Smith cleared his throat, and obediently recited:—

"Where England's ancient Barons, clad in arms,
And stern with conquest, from their tyrant King
(Thus render'd tame) did challenge and secure
The Charter of their Freedom. Pass not on
Till thou hast bless'd their memory, and paid
Those thanks which God appointed the reward
Of public virtue . . . er . . . ahem . . .
Go call thy sons; instruct them what a debt
They owe their ancestors, and make them swear
To pay it, by transmitting down entire
Those sacred rights to which themselves were born."

"That's the stuff," said Miss Smith again, rather drowsily. "Always been our rule here. Liberty but not licence. Eh? Liberty and law. Parliamentary government and the British constitution. Eh, Thinkwell?"

"I'm not quite certain, ma'am, precisely what you are asking me."

Miss Smith was not quite certain either. She was becoming irrelevant.

"Take 'em away, Bertie. They tire me. I'll see 'em again later. Time I had another nap. And I have to think of a text for to-morrow's sermon."

Mr. Smith tiptoed forward, waved the visitors towards the door, indicating that they were to advance to it backwards. His mother sat hunched up in her chair with half-shut eyes, a squat, brooding, little old woman, slightly tipsy. As they reached the door she opened her eyes wide and struck the table with her stick.

"Mind you, Thinkwell, don't you go putting notions

into the Orphans' minds. The Orphans are very well as they are. . . . Very well as they are. . . ."

Mr. Thinkwell bowed, and backed out of the door.

Steps hurried out after them, old, hobbling, crutched steps; and Jean the nurse followed them outside the house. She plucked at Mr. Thinkwell's sleeve. He looked down into her face, and it was working and twitching as if with tears. Moved, Mr. Thinkwell said kindly, "Yes? You want to speak with me?"

"Oh, sir! Oh, sir!" The old voice cracked and quavered. "Ye'll tak' me hame tae Scotland? Oh, I hae waited for this day! Tae see Aberdeen again afore I dee. . . . Tae eat an Aberdeen haddock. . . . Oh, I hae waited and watched and prayed, for I kenned in my hairt it wasna writ in the Book that I wad dee an exile! Ye'll tak' me hame tae Aberdeen, Thinkwell's grandson, and mak' amends for the wickedness of your grandfather? Wull ye swear tae tak' me hame, man?"

"Indeed I will." Mr. Thinkwell, a good deal touched, took her hand. "It must," he said, "have been a long and weary time for you here, so far from your home, and so curiously different."

She held his hand in both hers, and shook her head to and fro, the tears running down her channelled cheeks.

"A weary time; ay, a weary time. But I kenned in my hairt that rescue wad come, soon or late. The Lord has been guid tae send you here before the end. . . . Now I must awa' within."

She hobbled away. The younger Thinkwells had, for the first time on the island, a feeling that this was the right way to be received, and what they would have expected. It put them in their true position, as rescuers.

"Very proper," said Charles.

CHAPTER X

MRS. SMITH-CARTER

OUTSIDE Balmoral they were met by Mr. Smith's sister Adelaide, reclining in her negro-borne hammock. A stout, genial, jolly lady of perhaps five and fifty, hung about with jingling chains, her red face dabbed with white shell-powder, her baby monkey on her shoulder.

"Well," she snapped. "Are you going to let 'em go for a bit, my good Bertie? I fail, I must say, to see why you should monopolise our guests for the whole afternoon and evening. I want 'em to come and have supper with me."

"I have arranged," said Mr. Smith, "for a public supper, at which our visitors shall meet a number of us, and be introduced to our society in a formal and agreeable manner."

"Oh, a state banquet. As you please. I dare say it may amuse them. Who are you letting come? All the family?"

"There will scarcely be room for all. I am having the crier announce that any one desiring to be present must send in his or her name to my secretary, and I will consider the application."

"Free food?"

"Certainly not. The price of admission will be twenty corals, exclusive of drinks."

"Mamma won't appear, I suppose?"

"She may come in before the end, for speeches. But it is uncertain. Saturday night, you know. . . .

I left her thinking out to-morrow's text," he added, in a clear and audible tone, different from that in which he had said "Saturday night." "She had a long talk with our friends here."

"How did she take to 'em?"

"Kindly, on the whole. But she is most anxious that the Orphans should not get it into their heads that they are to be taken away."

"Quite right, quite right. Very bad for 'em. Besides, why in the world *should* they be taken away? This is the place for them. . . . Now, some of *us* would be glad of a change. I've a mind to see the world a little myself, now I've got the girls off. *I'll* come away with you, gentlemen, if you'll let me." She tapped Captain Paul with her palm fan, for she thought him handsomer than Mr. Thinkwell, as indeed he was.

"That brother of mine hasn't introduced me. I'm Mrs. Smith-Carter. *I'll* come away with you, with all the pleasure in life."

Captain Paul wondered if the Thinkwells realised what they were in for, if they knew the cost of getting all these queer birds to England, and what to do with them when there; but, as Thinkwell troubles touched him lightly, he bowed with gallantry.

"By all means, madam. Delighted to take you. But, you know, there'll be so many wanting to come that my little ship won't hold you all. We shall have to charter a liner for you."

"A liner? That's the kind of ship that split in two under mamma, ain't it? You'll have to bring a safe one, young man. We don't want another wreck. . . . Well, how long will it take you to fetch your liner?"

"A good many weeks, I'm afraid."

"Oh, Lord! What a time! Well, but you could carry some of us off on that little ship of yours, eh?"

"I fear the quarters are poor, ma'am. You would not be comfortable."

"Oh, well, I like to be comfortable, that's very true. . . . Ain't you comfortable on his ship, child?" the lady asked Rosamond.

"Very. It's a most nice ship."

"Still, you're young. I dare say that I shouldn't be comfortable. Perhaps I'll wait for the liner. That'll give me time to get some new clothes, after all. I've not a rag fit to face the world in. True-Heart Jenkins makes my things, and she's to be drowned Monday. I must find a new woman. . . . Are you interested in clothes, child?"

"No," said Rosamond, in her deep, abrupt little voice. "I mean, I don't know much about them."

"She doesn't know very much about anything," Charles explained, "except islands. She's a terribly ignorant girl."

Mrs. Smith-Carter's eyes approved the slim, nonchalant, dark young man.

"But *you* look as if you thought you knew plenty," she told him. "What does this impudent brother of yours know, child?"

"Charles? Oh, I don't know. Lots of things. . . . About restaurants, and books, and writers, and foreign countries, and plays, and pictures, and Russian dancing, and . . . oh, lots of things. . . ."

"What a catalogue," said Charles, pleased.

"Well," the lady said, "none of it sounds a lot of use, to me, but I dare say it's all right in your country. . . . You must make friends, both of you, with my niece, Flora. I shouldn't be surprised if she could teach you both something. A clever girl, Flora. Handsome girl, too. Seen her?"

"Yes," said Rosamond, and coloured pink.

"Well, you must get her to show you round. They try to keep her too much in leading-strings, and it makes her naughty, a fine, spirited girl like that. Wants to go her own way, Flora does. Scoldings won't cure her, and I've told my brother so. How does your papa treat you, girl? Is he stern with you?"

"Oh, no. Not stern."

"He looks a queer man. Is he clever? What does he know about?"

"Yes, he is clever. He knows about nearly everything." Rosamond was still so young as to have retained that filial illusion.

Charles, who was not, looked sceptical as he strolled away to listen to what Mr. Smith was saying to his father.

"Well, well," Mrs. Smith-Carter said, "that's not in my line. I'd rather a gentleman had agreeable manners and a handsome face and knew how to tell a good story after supper. And was God-fearing, of course," she added, on a yawn. "Mamma brought us all up to think a lot of that. Is your papa a God-fearing man?"

"I don't think father believes in God," said Rosamond.

"Not! Why, then he's an atheist. 'Pon my soul, mamma won't like that. How very wrong and ignorant of your papa, child. Did he bring you all up in irreligion, then? Are you and your brothers atheists, too?"

"Charles and William don't believe in God, I suppose. . . . But father didn't bring us up not to, he let us alone." Rosamond stammered away from the religious beliefs of Charles, William, and herself, not able or willing to articulate her own. For Rosamond had religion. She believed, in a deep, childish, and

romantic way, in God. She went further, and liked the expression of religion to be pictorial, lovely, sweet of sound and scent. Before the hard, patronising stare of this genial Smith lady, her religion fled, abashed, for cover.

"Well," said Mrs. Smith-Carter, yawning again, "to-morrow's Sunday, you know, and we all go to church. You'll have to come—papa, Charles, William, and all, and the other gentlemen, too, even if they *are* atheists. Do 'em good, I dare say. . . . Can't understand atheism, for my part, though, of course, we have it here, too. What I say is, if there's no God, *who made* us all, and the land and sea and sun and moon and stars, and the birds and fishes and beasts for us to eat, and all the rest of it? There's a poser for your papa, my dear, since he's so clever. Ask him that from me. It all made itself, no doubt he'll say. Oh, I know 'em, your clever folk who set themselves up to do without the Lord who made 'em. They come to no good, in this world or the next. We've always had 'em with us. I recollect 'em when I was a girl, jabbering away about the truths of science and disproving the Creator from His handiwork in the shells and rocks. Doubt, we called it then. It ain't doubt in these days, it's sheer impudence. Horrid atheism, mamma always called it. *She* never allowed it, I can tell you."

"What did she do?" Rosamond asked, interested.

"Tied 'em up, my dear, and fed 'em on nothing but shell-fish till they thought better of it. That was in the good old days. But people won't stand that now—they're grown so stuck up and independent, there'd be a riot. There has been, sometimes. . . . It's a sad, insolent age. . . . That Jesuit missionary that landed when I was a girl, *he* said we ought to burn 'em to

death. But mamma always said that would be popish. Mamma never would be popish; she don't like the Pope. What do *you* think of the Pope, child?"

Rosamond had never thought of the Pope, and did not even know who, at the moment, he might be. He was among the subjects concerning which she was, as Charles had said, terribly ignorant.

"I don't really know about him," she said. "Except that he's the head of the Roman Catholics, and lives in Rome." She searched her memory for more of the Pope. "Oh, and people who live in Ulster don't like him, I know that." For William had had, at Trinity, an Ulster friend.

"No respectable people like him, my dear. That poor Frenchman did; *he* called him God's legate on earth; but then he was mad. Eaten up by his own Zacharies he was, one day when they forgot themselves. He'd taught 'em to be papists; so much for popery, we all said. The Scarlet Woman, mamma calls it—I forget why. And as to God's legate, she says *she* can do all the legating that's wanted here. But we've never quite stamped it out. Bowing and scraping and crossing and burning herbs to make a smell at worship —seems as if some weak-minded folk can't help it. Especially in seaside places, mamma says. Just as some others must needs break out into private prayers of their own at public worship, getting all of an uproar. Mamma has always put her foot on that, too. She says we have the Protestant Church of England, and no need of anything else. . . . You seem vastly interested in religion, child, you're making me talk quite a lot about it. I must get on home now, and have a rest before this famous supper. I shall have a chat with the gentlemen later on. Home, Zachary!" She struck the nearest black man with her fan, and they lifted up

her hammock and bore her away. Rosamond looked after the fashionable, voluble lady and her pet monkey, at the stalwart, docile Zachary Macaulays, descendants of those Roman Catholic Zacharies who had eaten up the poor Frenchman. To Rosamond none of it seemed remarkable or strange; she knew that life was like that.

CHAPTER XI

THE BANQUET

THE long boards, standing on trestles, were set in the green glade at the wood's edge, looking on the glimmering sea. The feast was lit by the climbing moon; but on the table were lights—tall candles, and cocoanut bowls wherein lighted wicks floated in oil, and round each candle and bowl a small, soft glow spread over the neighbouring food.

"For what we are about to receive," said Mr. Albert Smith loudly from the table's head, "may the Lord make us truly thankful." They all sat down. Rosamond did not know what were the foods she was about to receive, but they all looked very delightful. There was soup, and tortoise meat, and fishes, and oysters, and birds, and roasted yams, and bread-fruit, and eggs, and mangoes, and bananas, and a kind of pear, and pandanus, and jellies, and cream, and sweetmeats, and all the island delicacies one could expect, served on shell plates. And drinks. . . . "What will you drink?" asked the young man next Rosamond, and she said, "Anything, please," and was given a goblet of liquor that tasted like sweet cider. She looked at her neighbour, and found him handsome and pale brown, with dark brows over southern eyes, and a proud, merry mouth, and she knew him for Flora's brother, Heathcliff.

"Is Flora here?" she asked, and he said, "Oh, yes. Opposite us there. Flora never misses a party, for all she says."

"What does she say?"

"Oh, all kinds of things. Proud things. About not obeying papa and mamma. So do I. Papa desired us to come to this banquet, so we all but didn't, but, after all, it seemed too amusing to miss."

Rosamond looked shyly across the table at Flora nearly opposite, clad in white and golden feathers. The candle beneath her threw up a wavering circle of gold on to her face and bare, beautiful throat, slipping softly over the smooth skin, the proud, mocking mouth, the proud, rounded chin, the scarlet flowers that flamed in the dark coils over each ear. Above the circle of light, Flora's brow shone argent to the silver moon; her dark, shadowed eyes and black brows slanted upwards a little to the outer corners, giving her a modified and attractive Mongolian touch. On her right hand sat Charles; fortunate Charles. Rosamond was glad of that; Charles was good at making friends when he chose; quicker than she was, and had more and better conversation. Flora and he were talking together, and both were laughing, their attractive faces turned towards each other. If Flora made friends with Charles, she must surely notice Rosamond later on, even though she was not clever and attractive like Charles.

Rosamond's eyes strayed up and down the length of the feast. At its head sat Mr. Albert Smith, presiding, keeping order, and so forth. Round him were Mrs. Smith-Carter (between Mr. Thinkwell and Captain Paul), and other important Smith-looking gentlemen and ladies of middle or elderly life. Somewhere among them was Mr. Merton. The table seemed to dwindle in importance down its length; still, doubtless, Smith, the guests seemed lesser Smiths, or younger Smiths, Smiths in some way of smaller account. These lesser

Smiths had been thought, obviously, the proper environment for the three younger Thinkwells. Round them there were a number of young people, for the most part very merry. At the table's foot sat the placid Mrs. Albert Edward Smith.

"You like banquets, too?" said Heathcliff Smith to Rosamond, seeing her happy smile as she looked up and down the feast and drank turtle soup out of a bowl.

"Yes," said Rosamond. "I mean, this banquet. Banquets on islands, you know. It's lovely. The things to eat look lovely, and having it out here in the moonlight, and the lights. . . . And the island, and the sea. Don't *you* like it?"

"Oh, well enough," he said carelessly. "The food looks fairly eatable. And I dare say some of the speeches will be amusing."

"Of course," she remembered, "you're *used* to being on an island."

"I should say so." He laughed. "Sick to death of it, too. I want to go away. I've always been of the Forward Party, which wanted to send boat expeditions to explore, but I was never let to go. Thank God you people have come at last. You'll never guess, I dare say, how pleased we were, some of us, to see you land. Flora and I said——"

"Was Flora pleased to see us?"

"Was she not? I should say so. I am sure Flora and I are both sick of living all our lives on one miserable island. We want to see the world—get about, and do things. Now pray, Rosamond—that's your name, isn't it?—tell me what it's all like, where you come from."

Rosamond reflected. She was no good at these large questions.

"Not nearly so nice as this," she said.

"Oh," he waved that aside, "that's just because you're used to it. I can tell you, this is deadly dull if you live here. Nothing but sea and land, sea and land, and the same old set of tiresome people. And old Grandmamma Smith in the background, laying down the law for us all and trying to stop everything amusing. . . . Lord, I'm sick of it. Pray tell me about England. From what grandmamma says of it, I'm inclined to think I shouldn't care for it so much as for some of the other countries. She brought us all up on tales of England, how free and good and great it is, and what a good influence among the nations, till we hate the sound of it. Of course, we know something about English people, and how they act in society and family life, from the books we have—*Wuthering Heights*, and the *Book of Correct Conduct*, and the *Holy War*. But old Jean says England is nothing to Scotland. . . . What's England *really* like, in these days?"

Rosamond thought. What was England really like? Green fields; cowslips; willows by slow streams; rain and chill winds. Colleges, learning, caps and gowns, gray skies, gray streets, motor-cars and bicycles, games, Girl Guides. . . . That was Cambridge. Beyond Cambridge, England; rolling green country with hedges; cows; roads choked with dust and loud with cars; deep lanes; old market towns of red-brown brick, with wide inn yards; little lichened hamlets with weather-beaten gray churches; great nightmare towns, shrieking and black, in the nightmare midlands and north; people, people everywhere, drab, pink, kindly, ugly, common, nice, silly people, all agog for life, wagging cheerful tongues, staring out of hard, curious eyes. Shops, newspapers, books, dogs, hot meals, and always, nearly always, that bite of bitter winds on body and soul.

Rosamond, stumbling confused among scattered pictures, selected.

"Cold," she said. "And they *talk* a lot."

"They couldn't," Heathcliff told her, "talk more than we do here. That I am sure they could not. . . . But is it happy? Is it free, as grandmamma says it is? Can people do as they please there?"

"No." Rosamond was sure of that. "We don't do as we please, most people don't. There are police, you see. And work. And we *have* to do things. Tiresome things."

"What kind of things?"

Rosamond thought.

"Wear shoes and stockings," she said, "in the road. And other clothes we don't want. Come in to meals at meal-times. Sleep indoors, mostly. Go out to tea sometimes. Talk to people who come in the house. Have classes, teaching girls and boys things—at least I do. Go to bazaars. Oh, dear, lots of things."

"Why do you? Is it the law, or does your papa make you?"

"No, father doesn't bother much. He has to do them, too. And it's not the law—not most of it. . . . I don't know . . . you just *have* to."

"You have an old queen, haven't you, like our grandmamma?"

"No, a king. *He* doesn't bother us, though."

"Oh, I thought a queen, called Victoria."

"No. There was once. She died ages ago, though; before I was born."

"Do your parents or grandparents or any one settle whom you are to marry, or mayn't marry?"

Rosamond laughed. "No! Of course not. People settle that for themselves."

"That's a good plan. Flora would like that. *She's*

not allowed to. Oh, but that's private, I forgot. . . . Do you like that bird? Too fishy, I think; they eat fish all day, you see. Have some more drink. This is prodigiously interesting, your coming from England. What are the other countries like? Are they better? There's France, isn't there, and Germany? My grandmamma says the French have always been our natural enemies, and eat frogs, and one Englishman can beat two Frenchmen, and they don't understand liberty."

"Well," said Rosamond, "I don't know. I've never been abroad, you see, till now. Charles has. He was in France. But the war spoilt it; they were fighting. . . . He doesn't much like the French, but not for those reasons, I don't think; he says they're too industrious, and stingy, and sentimental, and angry, and don't understand poetry. . . . I forget what else. But, you see, it was war time; I expect no one was very nice then. The Germans were the worst, of course."

"War time? We had a war time, too. A war of revolution. What was your war against France about?"

"Oh, it wasn't against France; France and we were on the same side. It was against Germany, and I don't exactly remember what it was about. Somehow they all quarrelled. . . . I don't know; I was only ten when it began, you see. It was ages ago. Anyhow, every one fought. It was a frightfully serious war."

"So was ours. The rebels were defeated, of course; they were too few. Now they mostly live in Hibernia —the other part of the island, you know—and feel discontented."

"Which side were you on?"

"I was too young to fight. But I think the rebels were right. They didn't like being governed by Smiths, and kept under, and given no land or power.

Why should they? *I* wouldn't stand it, if I came of the landless classes. And the way members of parliament—and my grandmamma too—chatter about the sacred name of freedom, and the rights of man, and the Isle of Liberty, and recite poetry about it—that makes it a great deal worse. Tedious humbug! Does your parliament talk like that, too?"

"I've never been to Parliament. And I don't read speeches, they look so dull. But my father and Charles say members of parliament are nearly always rather stupid people, and that's why people elect them."

"I am sure ours are, too. . . . This jelly is very agreeable, try it. Do you like jellies?"

"Well, some jellies. It depends on the taste. I like, very much indeed, the kind of jelly you get with cream, in a wine glass. And calves' foot. I don't care awfully much for the kind you make from jelly squares."

"I know nothing about calves' foot, or jelly squares. This has cream with it. It is made from the syrup of flowers, I think."

"It's very nice."

"You don't drink much. Have some more mango juice."

"Is that what it is? It's rather like cider—lovely."

Rosamond took a deep draught. The sweet, fermented, fruity stuff ran suavely through her body and mind. The banquet spread beneath the moon was a merry and magical feast. Opposite, Flora's golden face gleamed and swayed, like a tiger-lily on its stem, and her laughter broke like a brook on stones, like the run of the sea's glimmering edge up the dark shore. Exquisite Flora; radiant and marvellous Flora. Heathcliff, bending towards Rosamond, plying her

with delicate foods, asking questions about England, was radiant and marvellous too. As to the questions, Rosamond couldn't answer most of them. "I don't know," she said happily, and smiled down the table, smiled across to Flora, smiled up at the beamy moon. "I don't know." This was when Heathcliff's questions referred to society, politics, or recent history. She could answer well enough about food, or animals—only she could not make Heathcliff understand about horses, or cows, or dogs. She tried to describe her Peter at home. Heathcliff, knowing, of mammals, only monkeys, pigs, and turtles, could make but little of Peter, and scarcely believed how brave he was, and good, and full of love.

"What is his noise? Has he a noise?"

"Oh, yes, he barks, of course."

"Barks? What's barks?"

"Oh, well . . . like this . . ." Rosamond gave a creditable imitation.

Every one near at hand looked at her and smiled, and she smiled, too.

Charles said to Flora, "Lord, Rosamond's drunk."

"Yes," said Flora indifferently. "Is she often?"

"Never. *Jamais de la vie,* poor child. What chances has she?"

"Hasn't she chances? Why? Have you no drink in England?"

"I should say we have; thank God. But Rosamond . . . oh, well, Rosamond doesn't like the taste. She's too young. She likes raspberry syrup and lemonade. This stuff of yours is sweet and nice, and I suppose she exceeded. In fact, it is apparent that she has exceeded."

"Heathcliff's fault, no doubt. See, papa is looking at her."

Charles, looking up the table, saw Mr. Albert Edward Smith's cold eye transfixing Rosamond and his son.

"Heathcliff will get into trouble for this," said Flora. "Poor Heathcliff, he is for ever in trouble with papa."

"Well," said Charles, "it's not your brother's fault that Rosamond has a weak head and gets tipsy after a bowl of mango juice. No one else here seems tipsy, particularly."

"Not," said Flora coolly, "at the moment. My grandmamma will, when she comes in."

"Yes. We noticed that in your grandmamma. Has she always——?"

"The old people say that when first they all came here she had never drunk intoxicating drinks. She was a Total Abstainer (that's what she always calls it), and taught all the orphans about the vices of drink. But then she married my grandpapa, and caught it from him. . . . For that matter, she is still a total abstainer, and still talks of the vices of drink. But drink, she says, doesn't mean the stuff we ferment here; she calls that palm juice, or fruit juice. So does old Jean. So they both drink a prodigious amount of it, and yet are still Total Abstainers. . . . I don't know how they will manage when they get to England and Aberdeen. . . . See, here comes grandmamma. Now we all stand and sing."

Out from the dark palm grove into the moonlit, flame-lit sward came four Zachary Macaulays, bearing a canopied hammock, and in the hammock reclined Miss Smith.

Mr. Albert Smith sprang to his feet, lifting one arm high, as if to elevate the rest of the company, and at his gesture the banqueters all rose. Rosamond

stumbled to her feet; she felt Heathcliff's hand beneath her elbow, supporting her. Somewhere in the background a shrill piping began. The voices of the feasters rose in chorus:—

"God save our gracious queen,
God save our noble queen,
God save our queen.
Send her victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save our queen!

"O Lord our God, arise,
Scatter her enemies,
And make them fall.
Confound their politics,
Frustrate their knavish tricks;
On her our hopes we fix,
God save us all!

"Thy choicest gifts in store
On her be pleased to pour,
Long may she reign.
May she provide our laws,
And ever give us cause
To sing with heart and voice
God save our queen!"

During this anthem, Miss Smith, bowing very amiably, was assisted from her hammock and took her seat in the empty chair at Mr. Albert's left side. At its conclusion, Mr. Albert lifted his drinking cup high, and said loudly, "Ladies and gentlemen, Miss Smith!"

The toast was drunk. But Rosamond, lifting her goblet, found it empty, and Heathcliff did not replenish it, so she could not pledge Miss Smith. Instead, she

smiled sweetly at Flora and the moony sea, and repeated "Miss Smith," with great goodwill, adding, "But mine's all gone."

After the toast they all sat down, and the gentlemen lit at the floating wicks or candle flames some very peculiar-looking cigars they had, made of rolled leaves. Charles produced his own cigarettes and offered one to Flora, which she declined.

"You don't smoke?" he said, noting that she neither took his cigarettes nor those smoked by the gentlemen islanders.

Flora tilted her black eyebrows.

"I? Lord, no. Not at a banquet. Ladies don't smoke. Do yours?"

"Why yes, as often as not. Why not?"

"That's very amazing. Heathcliff!" She called across the table to him. "Charles says ladies smoke in England." She turned to Charles. "Grandmamma brought us up to think that females never smoke. Heathcliff and I used to smoke on the sly when we were children, but I was always whipped if I was caught. *No* lady smokes. That's what they tell us here."

"It was probably," said Charles, "the case in 1855, when Miss Smith lost touch with European society. But for the last thirty years and more, I believe, English females have smoked when they liked to. You had better begin now, and introduce it."

"Not I. Not with papa commanding such an excellent view of me. I will try one of your cigarettes in the wood later on, and see if I like them better than ours. . . . Lord, what a shock grandmamma and papa and mamma and all the old ones are going to get in England. The prospect pleases me. . . . Oh, dear, now we are to have speeches. I warn you not to listen to

papa; he talks at a great length, and is very tedious. I wouldn't be surprised if it were all about you to-night. Look, your sister is wise; she is going to sleep."

But Rosamond was not asleep. From under dropped lashes she saw the long table, lit by the moon; by the swinging orange moon, by a million shivering stars, by the wavering flames of tall candles, and the flickering glow of wicks floating in cocoa-nut bowls, that threw their circles of radiance over each oyster-shell plate. She saw the gay and feathered feasters, the gentlemen with their long cheroots and whorls of pungent smoke, the ladies eating sweetmeats, their tanned arms and faces paler in the moonlight than by day, their hair parted smoothly and coiled over each ear, in the prevalent island style, though some of the older ladies retained the fashions of their youth, and wore braided coronets or short locks, according to their period. She saw Flora's tiger-lily face, languid now and bored, and Charles, slim and oddly white among the red and brown people, in white drill, smoking a white cigarette, listening with a half smile to Mr. Albert Edward Smith. She saw Mrs. Albert Edward Smith, placid and fat, with her immense Spanish bosom, at the table's lower end, and, beyond the lit table, the dim shore and the glimmering, curling line that marked the contact of the Pacific with Orphan Island. Out on the purple sea were lights—the *Typee* waiting for her captain.

Suppose, thought Rosamond, suppose that the *Typee* should no longer wait for her captain, but should be off, away and away, back to Tahiti, back anywhere . . . reporting her captain, and Mr. Thinkwell, and Miss and the Masters Thinkwell, and Mr. Merton the trader, all drowned, lost, eaten up by sharks. No more, then, of the Cambridge Thinkwells; they would

join the Orphan nation, chart, document, and all, leaving no trace behind whereby they might be sought. So are we all, thought Rosamond, who was by no means too tipsy to reflect, and who found no reflection strange, so are we all in the hands of destiny, one another, and the Lord, and of a handful of chocolate-coloured sailormen.

From far away, above the distant crooning of the surf on the lagoon's reef, above the soft murmur of the trade wind in the palms, came the mellow notes sounded by Mr. Smith, bearing at times, to Rosamond, some kind of coherent meaning, then drifting again away down some lunatic path of dream.

"These welcome visitors who have landed on our shores. . . . Proud and happy to show them our island community, that they may compare it with their and our own mother country. I think we may say, with humble gratitude to Him from whom all gifts flow, that our island will not suffer greatly from the comparison . . . constitution . . . just and good laws . . . equity . . . sacred name of liberty . . . we may say, with a profound humility, that all these English flowers burgeon and flourish on our little island. . . . We have among us now a gentleman of learning, who studies and writes of human society. . . I may say that we shall welcome the frank expression of his opinion of our island ways, when he has had opportunity of observing them. . . . Kind and obliging suggestion that our visitors should transport such of us as care to go to the Wider World. This will have to be considered carefully before we arrive at a decision, and I may say that Miss Smith's government will give it their early consideration. There must be no impatience on this point, no giving way to the mere craving for excitement and sensation which is so

marked and so distressing a feature of our age, especially among the younger people. . . ." Here Rosamond lost touch, and did not find it again until Heathcliff nudged her and said, "Pay attention. We are going to drink your healths." And, sure enough, every one but the visitors rose, bowls in hand, for Mr. Smith had just said, "Ladies and gentlemen, our visitors!"

Rosamond beamed sleepily at Flora across the table. Did Flora smile back, and was there mockery in her smile, as she lifted her goblet and said, "Our visitors?" Rosamond only knew, and was happy to know, that Flora was pledging her.

For the visitors Mr. Thinkwell returned thanks, in his precise, cultured, Cambridge voice and manner.

"I like your papa," Heathcliff said to Rosamond. "He says less than our papa, and better. I should say his mind is sharper—less round, you know. Our papa is very round in his thoughts and words—he rolls them out. Yours is different . . . less . . . less . . ."

Less florid, he meant, but that was not an island word.

"Yes," agreed Rosamond, perceiving drowsily that this was so.

"Now," said Heathcliff, when Mr. Thinkwell had done, "we all stand up, while my grandmamma speaks to us. She's quite tipsy to-night, so she won't be long."

Rosamond struggled to her feet again. But, what with the liquor she had drunk, and that which Miss Smith had drunk, she made very little sense of what Miss Smith said, in her harsh old grating voice. It seemed partly about the visitors, partly about the Orphans, partly about Miss Smith, partly about the Lord. . . .

"This island, so 'mazingly man'factured by tiny insects, that the Lord has given us to dwell in. . . ."

Rosamond heard that. So did Heathcliff, who muttered "Damn the island" softly into his cigar.

"Let our visitors," Miss Smith exhorted, "gain good 'pressions of us . . . innocent revelry's one thing, sensual dissipation quite 'nother. 'Member, dear children, it's Sat'y night, to-morrow's the Sabbath, no revelling after midnight. No common, Orphan manners. We d'shire that every one be on their best behaviour this evening, and while Thinkwell 'n his family and friends are 'mong us. Shocking rogue, Thinkwell was, but his son" ("Grandson," Mr. Smith corrected in her ear.) "Hold your tongue, Bertie; I said grandson. Thinkwell's grandson ain't to blame for that. We d'shire Thinkwell's 'scendants be treated with civility. We'd have Thinkwell whipped if *he* had the impudence to land here . . . but he's dead . . . ain't your rogue of a grandfather dead, young Thinkwell?"

"Long since, madam," Mr. Thinkwell replied.

"Serve him right. Died young. *We* didn't die, though he did his best to kill us. The Lord preserved us, and here we are yet. . . . eh, Thinkwell?"

"By all means, madam."

Mr. Albert Smith, who perhaps thought his mother's speech becoming too conversational, here whispered something to her, and himself concluded her address.

"Miss Smith is a little tired to-night, and will say no more. I am very sure that we shall all put her precepts into practice. I will ask you all now to give a hearty cheer for Miss Smith, and the banquet will then be concluded."

After the hearty cheer, the banqueters left the table as they chose.

CHAPTER XII

THE BALL

I

HEATHCLIFF said to Rosamond, "Now there will be a ball. I hope you feel inclined to join, and will dance with me."

"I would rather watch," said Rosamond. She felt unsteady on her legs; her head swam pleasantly, and the moon tumbled about.

There began flutes, drums, the clashing together of shells. Mid-Victorian waltz-tunes made the night plaintive and sweet. Miss Smith, in her youth, cannot have been too evangelical to go to balls; or was it Dr. O'Malley who had thus handed down music and the dance?

There was a rush of young people to an open space of smooth grass, between the woods and the sea. The elders, more sedately, sat and lay about the shore, or in the shadowed thickets, listening to the music, watching the dance.

Rosamond found herself solitary, lying beneath great feathery trees, between the moonlight and the shade. A thousand perfumes drenched the warm air; sweeter than honey was the silver night on the tangled wood. Exquisite was the purple sea, foam-edged, and exquisite the wistful, swaying, voluptuous rhythms of the dance. Sensuous music, sensuous, swaying motions; to Rosamond, unconscious child of a sober, post-war generation, a generation which, growing up in the shadow of death, had not been able to cast it

from them, but danced in shadow still, with stately, sober demure steps to halting, tuneless tunes, ascetic and grave and reserved—to Rosamond the sweet tunes and swinging, sensuous motion of an earlier and a more sentimental day were strange and new. She gazed at the circling pairs, clad in bright plumes and flowers, with smooth, bare limbs; lovely they were to her, dancing thus against the background of the murmuring sea, between the whispering sea and the dark wood. Lovely and strange and full of grace, and the music as tunes heard in dreams.

Flora was dancing, all a moony fire, her partner a beautiful youth, fair-haired, slim-limbed, with long, sea-coloured, laughing eyes. An exquisite pair, as two young gods might be, dancing lightfooted on earth.

And then, passing close to Rosamond, these two, not waiting for the end of the waltz, broke asunder, turned, wordless, each from each; the young man slipped into the shadowed woods and the young woman danced up to Charles Thinkwell.

"*Now*, if you still would like a dance. . . ."

Rosamond saw her face, and it was like a fire gone out, a blown flame.

Off they went, Flora and Charles, he a strange, prim, white figure among the feathers and bare limbs that were island evening wear; a stiff, prim figure, which made but a poor thing of the waltz, for Charles was used to a stiffer and a more stately step, and, too, he despised the sugared melody that the flutes were wailing. A *slushy* tune, he called it, and could scarcely bring himself to keep in step with it. A *round* tune, perhaps, as Heathcliff would say. Charles preferred music to be angular.

Flora laughed at him; Rosamond saw her laughter breaking out of her quenched radiance.

"Perhaps lancers or Sir Roger or the quadrille are more in your line, Charles."

"I used to be rather a success at Sir Roger at children's parties," Charles owned.

"Are you good at the polka, or the gallop, Charles? For certainly you are not good at the waltz."

"I am sorry. We dance differently in England, you see. We don't glide and leap; we walk."

"Well, here's the end of this one. . . . We must certainly teach you to waltz, Charles. The next is lancers. . . . I'm going down to the sea. . . . Did you call, mamma?"

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Smith were sitting beneath a great mango tree at the glade's edge, on two chairs. They had arrived a few minutes ago, just before Flora began to dance with Charles.

"What is it, mamma?"

"Flora! Be careful." Mrs. Smith's voice was admonitory, staccato.

"Oh, yes, mamma. I am being careful."

Rosamond saw the half closure of Flora's left eye, and realised, with the intuition of the tipsy, that this was, indeed, the case. Flora had been, on her parents' advent, so careful as to change one partner for another.

"You must not go alone down to the sea, Flora."

"Why in the world not, mamma?"

"It's not the proper thing, my dear."

"*Really*, mamma. . . ."

Mr. Smith intervened.

"My dear Flora, when your mamma has desired you not to act in a certain manner, the subject is closed."

"Oh, la, la," muttered Flora, using an ejaculation that had been handed down since the days of the French missionary, but was considered not at all Smith.

"Pray," said Flora, folding her hands before her like a little girl, "what *may* I do, mamma?"

"I should think that you would wish to go on dancing, my dear, as it's a ball. Are you not dancing with your cousin George at all?"

"No, mamma, not at all. Oh, dear me, no. If I must dance the lancers I will dance them with Charles, and teach him how to do more than walk. Come, Charles."

"Where is your nice little sister?" Mrs. Smith asked of Charles.

Flora answered, "The nice little sister exceeded at table, and is doubtless sleeping it off somewhere. Come, Charles."

Exceeded at table! Unkind phrase, so lightly, indifferently, contemptuously tossed. It pierced Rosamond's shield of perfumed airs and sweet, drowsy peace, and faintly rankled. To-morrow morning she would mind that phrase. To-night she scarcely minded anything, her happiness was too deep, too pervading, too rich.

The lancers were danced, and a polka, and a waltz again, and more waltzes, and a quadrille, and a gallop. What wildness, what speed, was in the bare, galloping feet on warm turf, while the pipers piped "John Peel."

Rosamond sat up, and took off her shoes and stockings. She stood among the dropping cocoa-nuts; the grass was warm beneath her bare toes. The very moon, she thought, was warmer here than suns in England. She came out of the shadow of the trees, smiling sweetly at the ball. Heathcliff materialised out of the shades and came to her, asking her to dance. They were still galloping. Rosamond gave Heathcliff her hand; his arm, taut and brown, circled her waist, and away they dashed. Round and round the open sward

they sped, fleet and smooth and light, the grass moon-warm to their flying, naked feet, perfumes as of vanilla, of honey, of the sea, on the balmy air they breathed. Round and round, and round, chased by feathered crowds as by light birds, light and swift as happy birds themselves.

"Oh," Rosamond breathed. "Oh."

Then, "The sea is like silver fire. I want to dance to the sea."

"By all means," said Heathcliff, and leaped with her from the grass plateau on to warm sands, and galloped to the Pacific's silver edge. The warm waves lapped about their feet, luminous with phosphorescent gold.

"Deeper," said Rosamond, and deeper they went, until the Pacific splashed about their knees, and their bare legs glowed and shone alight.

"Deeper," said Rosamond. "I want to swim."

"No," Heathcliff said. "You mustn't swim out now. A shark was seen in the lagoon this evening."

"It won't hurt me," said Rosamond fatuously, feeling all birds and beasts and fishes her friends to-night.

"Can't risk it," said Heathcliff. "Twenty times they'll let you pass, and the twenty-first they'll snap you up. Uncertain brutes. There—see that fin?"

A dark point rose above the sea a hundred yards from shore, and sank again.

"Come along," said Heathcliff. "They're beginning the next dance."

"You go. I shall stay down here." She waded out, and lay on her stomach on the sand, her chin in her hands, staring at the sea. Heathcliff hesitated.

"I like it here," said Rosamond. "I don't want to dance. You go."

Heathcliff left her.

2

The touch of the sea had washed away most of the fumes from Rosamond's brain; she lay, all but sober, and listened to the dance music and to the gentle moan of the Pacific against the lagoon reef, half a mile from shore.

William's square form came between Rosamond and the moon.

"Hallo. Your legs are dripping fire. I should like to catch some of those insects." He crouched at the sea's edge, dripping flaming water through his fingers.

"I say, Charles told me you were squiffy at dinner. Are you still?"

"Yes, I think so."

"You must have had an awful lot of that stuff. *I* couldn't do anything on it. What's more, nor could Merton or Paul. . . . I say, it's not bad here, is it. I should like to stay a long time, wouldn't you?"

"Yes. Always."

"I've been finding out how they tell the time. They have sundials and moondials, and shells of sand which run out in an hour. But their time is ten minutes slow. I must say I think they've done pretty well all round, considering they only began with an axe and a few lancets and forceps and things, and I suppose some pocket knives. They build jolly well. And make cloth. Old Miss Smith must have had her head screwed on all right in those days. . . . I say, *she* was pretty tight to-night, wasn't she. . . . When twelve o'clock strikes we shall all have to turn in; they keep Sunday here. . . . Wish I could catch these little fools. . . . Hallo, Paul."

The captain's lounging length dropped beside Rosamond on the sand.

"Feeling better?" he inquired.

"I'm all right, thank you." She was no longer pleased and stirred by his presence. She was indifferent, and he a long way off, part of another world, bearing no relation to the island beneath the moon.

"Not used to the stuff, are you?" he said. "You'll have a head to-morrow. I shouldn't wonder. . . . Merton and I are going back to the *Typee* presently. . . . This is an experience, isn't it? Something to talk about when we get back. It'll make a sensation."

He talked an alien language; Rosamond did not follow him. She nodded assent, her eyes on the silver sea. Talk, and talk, and talk. She wanted to swim, to wade, to curl up in the warm sand and sleep. A small wind spiced with vanilla stroked her cheek, stole into her mouth. There was a stirring of birds in the woods, and sharp, staccato cries, and it seemed that a monkey also woke and sang.

It was the warning of the week's end, for in another minute midnight was struck; twelve clashing blows of stones or shells, and a loud voice cried through the sudden silence, "Oh, yes! Oh, yes! Oh, yes! Sunday morning and a fine calm night!".

The island was hushed, calm, sedate.

"If they only knew," said William, "it's been Sunday morning for the last ten minutes."

The shadow of Flora fell on Rosamond.

"I've been sent," she said, "to fetch you. It's bedtime. I believe you are sleeping at the Yams."

Her voice was clear and cool, like a small water-fall, or ice tinkling on glass; her face was as a blown candle, which smoulders still.

"Perhaps," said Flora to William, "you will help her up to the Yams."

"Oh, she's all right now, aren't you?" said William. "I mean, you can walk all right, can't you?"

"Yes," said Rosamond sulkily. "But I'd like to sleep on the shore."

"No one is allowed to do that," Flora said. "It's a law. People must sleep either in their houses or in the unenclosed part of the woods."

"In the woods, then," said Rosamond.

"Well, I expect you'll have to sleep in the house to-night. Mamma has got a bed all ready for you. She and papa always sleep indoors. It's not thought Smith to sleep out; it's common and Orphan."

"But I'm not Smith."

"You're not Orphan, though. You're a visitor. And a lady. You'll have to sleep in the spare feather bed at the Yams."

"Where do you sleep?"

Flora shrugged her shoulders.

"Oh, I'm allowed to sleep in the garden. Not outside it. One might, you see, meet undesirable characters." She gave the words the intonation of her papa.

"Well," said Captain Paul, "I must say good-night, Miss Flora; I'm off to my ship." He looked at her loveliness with hungry and melancholy eyes, then called aloud for Mr. Merton.

"Lord knows where he's got to, among all those girls."

William stayed to help him, and Flora and Rosamond went up from the beach.

3

The island was quiet beneath the high moon. A few persons still strayed about, looking already Sundayfied and demure; most had retired to rest. Mr.

Albert Smith, with Mr. Thinkwell and Charles, were waiting at the wood's edge.

"You have been a great while, my child," said Mr. Smith, with the mild and firm displeasure that was his customary reaction towards his children.

"I thought I had desired you to fetch Miss Rosamond instantly."

Mr. Thinkwell also looked with displeasure on his child. He did not care that his family should become intoxicated at meals.

Mr. Smith patted Rosamond on the shoulder.

"I fear that our island drinks proved a little too much for you, my dear. Moderation in all things: that has always been our rule here. You see, we have it carved on that tree there."

True enough, so they had. And on other trees were other maxims and comments on life, of which some were biblical, and several by Dr. Isaac Watts, a poet with whom Miss Smith would seem to have had a close acquaintance.

"My mother," explained Mr. Smith, as they walked down the glade, "during the first years here caused the elder among her young charges to inscribe with knives on trees wholesome texts from the Bible (of which she unfortunately had no copy with her) and passages from the best English verse. An admirable plan, for our people, as they go about their business, are thus constantly confronted with the maxims of religious and virtuous living."

From the trunk of a great banana tree "Grace Sufficient," cut in deep capitals, leaped at them. On a mango next it was carved a large eye, and beneath it, "Thou Seest Me." On the pepper tree beyond was "Waste Not Want Not," and, on a palm, "Go to the

Ant, Thou Sluggard," with a verse of poetry circling scroll-wise down the tree,—

"In Works of Labour or of Skill
I would be Busy, too,
For Satan finds some Mischief still
For Idle Hands to do."

On another palm tree, farther on, were two grim stanzas:—

"Have you not Heard what Dreadful Plagues
Are threatened by the Lord
To him that Breaks his Father's Law
Or Mocks his Mother's Word?

"What heavy Guilt upon Him lies!
How cursed is his Name!
The Ravens shall Pick out his Eyes,
And Eagles Eat the Same."

Many other good counsels there were, in verse and prose. Charles was delighted. Rosamond had always been taught that it was rather Orphan to carve on trees, but it certainly made a wood interesting.

They reached the Yams. Mrs. Smith was at the open door, sleepily kind.

"Come in, my dear. I've just been shaking up a nice feather bed for you."

"I would rather, if you don't mind, sleep out of doors," said Rosamond.

"Oh, but, my dear! No indeed, that would never do. Mr. Smith and I couldn't possibly allow it."

"Flora does."

"Flora's a sad wild girl, and we allow her to take her bed into the garden sometimes. But I'm sure,

my dear, you ain't used to such droll ways; is she, Mr. Thinkwell?"

"I often sleep out of doors at home."

"You had better do what is most convenient to Mrs. Smith, Rosamond," said Mr. Thinkwell, like a father.

"Indeed, my dear, you'll sleep off that little attack you had much better indoors. There, we'll say no more about it, will we; girls will be girls, we all know, and I'm sure it was very naughty of Heathcliff to tempt you on."

Rosamond was led indoors, and shown a recess behind a palm curtain in which stood a wooden trough full of the soft, downy feathers of birds' breasts, white and rosy and green and gold.

"A pretty bed, is it not? We spread this sheet over it, you see, and here's another to go over you. I hope you'll be comfortable. And there is the washstand, with warm water and soap. You'll find our soap makes a very nice lather, especially with a little sea water, which I've put in this bowl for you. I hope you'll have everything you want. You'll be woken in the morning, and if you'd like a warm bath Flora shall take you to the hot springs."

"Thank you. But I'd rather bathe in the lagoon. Is there church?"

"To-morrow? Oh, yes. At eleven o'clock."

"I meant before breakfast," said Rosamond, this being the only time at which she was used to church.

"Before breakfast! No, my dear; what a droll idea!" The stout, kind lady looked nervously over her shoulder at Mr. Smith, to see if he was listening, and saw that he was.

"Quite a popish idea," she said. "I am sure we

never heard of divine service before breakfast in *our* church. Did we, papa?"

Mr. Smith looked stonily at her and at Rosamond.

"Certainly not," he said. "You are not a Roman Catholic, are you?" he asked suspiciously.

"Oh, no. But I thought all churches had early services."

"Not the Church of England," said Mr. Smith firmly, and Mr. Thinkwell noted that Miss Smith had not been in touch with the Tractarian movement.

"We will all go to church at eleven," said Mrs. Smith. "I don't think it's Communion Sunday; if it were we could stop on. That would have been nice, to be sure, but it will have to be another Sunday. Good-night, my dear. I hope you will sleep. Would you like Flora to lend you one of her nightdresses?"

"No, thank you."

Mr. Thinkwell, meanwhile, said that he would, before turning in, make an examination of the stars. He took a good deal of interest in the stars, and, though ethnology and sociology were his subjects, he always felt that stellar episodes were more attractive and pleasing than terrestrial ones, and had, somehow, more of purity. Charles said that this was only because his telescopes magnified insufficiently.

Mr. Thinkwell and Charles said good-night to Mrs. Smith, and were conducted by Mr. Smith to the place in a private part of the woods where, after observing the heavenly bodies, they would sleep.

Rosamond, in a silk vest behind her palm curtain, lit by a hanging string of candle-nuts, sank deep into bright feathers from the breasts of birds. The Sunday morning moon looked whitely in through the window on her. Small winds from the thicket stole in, smelling of frangipani and island spices, and breathed

into her mouth. Small sharp cries, small sweet flutings and wailings and warblings, soft stirrings of birds and beasts, the thud of dropping nuts, the murmur of the wind in feathery palms, sounded all night through her dreams, and beyond them the Pacific crooned and moaned against a coral reef.

Rosamond, intoxicated child, slept.

In the garden Flora lay awake, excited with rebellion, dancing, and love.

In the wood Mr. Thinkwell and William gazed at planets and at stars, while Charles jotted down notes for a poem. Then they all three lay beneath a mangrove tree on the palm mattresses they had been given, drew coverings over them, and slept. The more common parts of the wood were full of other sleeping forms —persons of both sexes too Orphan to sleep in houses. Many lay in amity two by two, as if Orphan Island were Hyde Park.

CHAPTER XIII

SUNDAY MORNING

I

Mr. Thinkwell was woken next morning, after the kind of night one expects in woods, by a man rattling a tray of cocoa-nuts about the island and crying "Miow." Mr. Thinkwell inferred that he was, therefore, the milkman, and made a note in his pocket-book.

"The inability, or aversion, on the part of British milkmen to utter the word 'milk' is to be found also on this island. An interesting example of a curious human phenomenon revealing itself apart from infection. Unless, indeed, one of the original orphans chanced to be a milkman's child and conveyed the tradition."

When the milkman came near, Mr. Thinkwell called to him and asked him, "Why do you cry miow?"

"Because I'm the milkman, sir. Any milk to-day?"

"Yes, please; I will take a nutful. But you do not make yourself quite clear to me. Why do you not rather call *milk*?"

"That's just what I do call, sir. Shall I charge it to Mr. Smith, sir? Miow!" He pursued his rounds. Mr. Thinkwell drank his nutful of milk, which he liked very much, as it came from the cow-tree and had a peculiar, rich flavour. "Vegetables do these things better than we do," he reflected, and went to sleep again, for the stars, centipedes, land crabs, birds,

monkeys, and other ingredients of the woodland scene, had kept him awake much of the night.

Through the hush of the opaline morning Rosamond stole from the Yams in the bathing suit she had brought with her from the *Typee* (for she always remembered to take her bathing suit with her wherever she went). She thought she would wear it all the day, so that she could be in and out of the sea without trouble.

Her head ached a little, but the air was like thin, sweet wine. The grass under her naked feet was silver with the dew; under the trees and shrubs about the path sleepers lay; the island was waking into life, but was not yet waked. But the birds had woken with the dawn, and were shrilling cascades of music everywhere, and courting tortoises were uttering hoarse cries of love, and milkmen entreating the pierced trunks of the tall cow-trees for their sunrise flow, as one coaxes the udders of cows.

The shore was golden under the climbing sun, and the lagoon lay pale and smooth like milk, or like a great pearl.

By the lagoon's edge there was a great yellow she-turtle with mauve stripes, and it was chasing Charles, who, clad in an apron of fig-leaves, held out his hand to it as he fled, flattering it with ingratiating smiles, as one flatters a fierce dog, saying "Good turtle. Nice turtle. Down, sir" (for though I say it was a she-turtle, and it is the truth, this was not for Charles to know).

A little way off, William, similarly costumed, crouched with a net and a tin basin in a deep coral pool, up to his chest in dull green sargassum, which

he was exploring for live creatures with the care of a cat who hunts fleas in his long fur. Already he had caught and detached from their protective weed three green crabs, two violet and orange molluscs, several hydroids, and a small filefish, and he was now tugging at a large scarlet anemone which clung desperately to white coral rock.

Rosamond watched him. How much did anemones feel?

"Don't be rough with it, William."

"All right, it likes it," said William, as he used to tell her ten years ago about worms on hooks, and, indeed, fishes too. To Rosamond the world had seemed, in those days, a wonderful place, full of minor animals rejoicing in suffering like the Christian saints.

"It's *anemonia sargassensis*," said William, winning the tug-of-war. "It had no business on the rock."

"Oh," Rosamond breathed, bending over the pool, "there are tiny things like shrimps, transparent as glass, with green balls in them."

"Shrimps with eggs," said William.

"Don't catch them, William."

"Yes. They'll like it in the basin. They'll lay their eggs there."

A brood of baby shrimps leaping from the egg, clear as glass, scuttling round and round the basin. . . . Perhaps they would like it.

Rosamond hung face downwards from a rock, peering deep into the weedy pool. She saw the small sea world where scarlet and yellow and green crabs, some bearing their shells on their backs, some on their stomachs, scuttled about among tiny, bright-coloured fishes, and pink and yellow and blue trifles which were, William said, copepods. Tiny anemones opened and shut like flowers; little sea worms wriggled among wav-

ing hydroids; translucent shrimps, egg-laden, passed beamily about their business.

"I wish," remarked Charles, behind them, "that some one who can control this turtle would call it off. I can't bathe with it swimming after me with its mouth open and hissing."

"You shouldn't have aggravated it," William grunted, thrusting his net beneath a patch of weed. "You'd better sit on its back. They like that."

Charles tried.

"I daren't sit with my whole weight, I'm afraid of cracking it. Steady, you brute. . . . You're quite wrong, William; they don't like it. Animals like far fewer things than you think. I've told you that before."

"What are you doing to Sarah?" called a voice, thin and husky from recent sleep, and there, stepping down from the wood together, beautiful and bronze-limbed, clad in scanty skin bathing suits, were Flora and her golden-haired young man.

"It is more," Charles explained, "what Sarah is doing to me. . . . I went in to swim, and Sarah pursued me like a devil and chased me up the beach. Look, she is after me now."

"You must have annoyed her, poor Sarah. Down, Sarah; down, miss. Back to the sea with you. Shoo!"

Before the advance and hand-clapping of Flora and her friend, Sarah retreated, with sulky hissings and wagging head, and floundered into the lagoon.

"I didn't know," said Charles to the young man, "that you kept turtles as pets here. I thought they were caught and eaten."

"Not the females; they are too valuable. . . . Flora, introduce us, if you please."

"Certainly. Mr. Charles Thinkwell—Mr. Conolly. A cousin of my own. As to his first name, he was christened Nogood, but his parents, not liking the name, privately called him Peter. Shall we swim?"

Mr. Nogood Peter Conolly shook hands with Charles, with a very pleasing smile.

"I have," he said, "a thousand things to ask you about the world."

"And I you about the island," Charles replied. "The island is the more interesting, I think."

"Oh, Lord, the island ain't interesting at all. Is it, Flora?"

"Not in the least. The most tedious place in the world, I dare say. Cramped, narrow, old-fashioned, ruled by old people who haven't marched with the times . . . we're sick to death of it. We want to be free, and to see the world. Oh, I can tell you, Mr. Charles Thinkwell, we were pleased enough to see you land here. Shall we swim?"

Rosamond tumbled from her rock and splashed into the lagoon after them. Flora glanced at her over her shoulder.

"A pretty morning," she said. "I hope you slept well."

"Very, thank you. But to-night I shall sleep out of doors."

"That's as may be." Flora dived. Rosamond saw her, through swaying green prisms of light, crawling on the sandy floor, picking up bright shells. Mr. Conolly joined her, and in a moment they shot up, hand in hand.

"You should dive," called Flora to Rosamond. "It clears the head."

Rosamond plunged head downwards into green light. But she could not arrive at the sandy bottom; she

sputtered and came up. Charles tried too, but the Cambridge Thinkwells were no divers.

Heathcliff came running down the beach and leaped shouting into the lagoon. He took Charles and Rosamond each by a hand, and plunged with them to the bottom of the sea. A handful of shells and wet sand Rosamond scooped up; she grabbed at a scarlet fish; bursting with spent breath she shot up, spluttered too soon, came to the surface and choked.

"All a matter of habit," Heathcliff told her. "You'll dive famously before long."

Flora and Mr. Conolly were swimming out, racing, splashing each other, to the reef that bounded the lagoon. The others followed. The morning lay like a smile on the Pacific. The dawn held the lagoon at its heart, as an oyster shell holds a pearl. Swimming shorewards, they saw the wooded island rising up from the white beach, breathed its scented airs, heard its light, sharp cries.

William, at the sea's edge, was wriggling along wet sand on his stomach, chasing a thorny lobster.

They waded out, shaking the sea from their hair and eyes.

"I hope, Thinkwells," said Flora, "that you can keep a secret better than you can dive. For there is a detail in this morning's events, which you would oblige me by not mentioning. You bathed with Heathcliff and myself, if you like, but not with Mr. Peter Nogood Conolly. Neither have I introduced you to him. If he bathed at all, this morning, it was off the Hibernian shore, not here. One has one's discretions, you will observe, in one's narrations to one's parents. You too, no doubt. Though, as to that, I would willingly exchange my papa for yours. Yours has the air of being scarcely a papa at all. You'll be discreet?"

"Completely. As to Rosamond, she seldom troubles to tell any one anything, unless they ask. And William notices little among the human species."

"He is a sensible young man. Lobsters are more harmless than people, even when they pinch. Peter, you must leave us; people are coming down to the shore."

Mr. Conolly rapidly described a circuit that led him to the isthmus that joined Hibernia to the main island.

Flora looked after him.

"Nogood," she explained, "because my grandmamma told his mother—she was a Smith—that no good would come of her taking up with his father. And what came of it was Peter. So grandmamma had him christened Nogood. And I am not supposed to see him or speak to him, because of two things—he is a bastard, since his parents weren't allowed to marry, and his papa is a rebel, who took a leading part in the Revolution, and is now a convict. But I do see him and speak to him, as you see."

"A convict! You have convicts here? How do you manage?"

"Oh, yes, we have convicts. They work in a gang in Convicts' Cove, at the other side of the island. They are roped together so that they can't escape, and always guarded by police."

"Are they criminals?"

"For the most part. Some are rebels. I dare say papa will take you to see them; he would enjoy it. In fact you'll see them if you look behind you at service this morning. They sit at the back."

"Service? Oh, I shan't go to that. I never do. Can't you show me the island during service?"

"Lord, no. We all have to be at church. You

have the drollest ideas, Charles Thinkwell. Don't you have to go to church on Sunday where you come from?"

"Not after we grow up. Our places of education make us go; they are still mediæval in method."

"I don't know what that means: never mind, don't tell me; I abhor being told the meaning of words. I shall like to live in England, shan't you, Heathcliff? Here there's a fine for not attending service."

"Miss Smith said the island was the home of liberty. I heard her."

"No doubt," Heathcliff said. "You'll hear her again, if you listen. Liberty is one of her favourite words. She learnt it when she was a child. And, if you've not heard it yet, you'll soon hear that liberty doesn't mean licence."

"One doesn't have to come to the South Seas to hear that. They tell us that at home. Also that freedom means freedom to do right. Do you have that too?"

"Oh, yes. . . . Our island and yours don't seem so very different, after all."

"Well, you see, your nation and your Miss Smith are a British product. *Coelum non animum mutant,* I'm afraid."

"That sounds like Latin," said Flora. "Latin isn't allowed here."

"Why in the world not?"

"I don't know; it's a rule. Something to do with my grandfather, I believe. He wasn't very good, you know, and taught the Orphans Latin phrases that grandmamma thought were improper. But, as she didn't know Latin, I don't know how she knew they were improper. I suppose she knew my grandpapa,

and that was enough. Poor grandpapa, a shark had him, and we never mention him. Papa remembers him, and looks shocked if any one says his name. I think he must have been a rather agreeable rattle. So does Aunt Adelaide."

"Well, look here," said Charles, "will you show me the island after this service is over?"

"Oh, la la! We have to keep very quiet to-day, you know. It's Sunday."

"You have the drollest ideas, Flora Smith. One would think it was a Jewish island and that this was Saturday. Anyhow, I don't see that you've kept so very quiet so far."

"Ah, this is early, and no one much is about. I now put on my Sunday dress and my Sunday behaviour."

"I shall keep on my bathing-suit," said Rosamond. "So that I can easily go in and out of the sea."

"My dear, I've told you you'll have to come to service. You can't come to service in your bathing-suit."

"Can't I? Why not?"

"Well, do they do that on *your* island?"

Rosamond felt abashed. "I suppose not. But ours isn't a *desert* island. I should have thought that here we could have dressed as we liked."

"We're not savages here, thank you," Flora said sharply, and Rosamond saw that she was offended, and turned red and unhappy. Charles was displeased with her too, and said, "It's Rosamond who's the savage. Forgive her rustic manners; she means no harm."

But Rosamond felt that Flora did not forgive her just yet for her rudeness, and this depressed her so much that she left them, and joined William by the sea and picked up shells. Of course, she thought, she should have known that people on desert islands would

be sensitive about it, and would try to be extra civilised and well-dressed and proper just because it was a desert island.

"What shells have you found?" asked William, and Rosamond, who liked shells but was ignorant of conchology, showed him a handful of the pretty, coloured things.

"I am looking," he said, "for a chiton and a club-spined sea-urchin. You might tell me if you come across either."

"I shouldn't know them."

"Well, show me anything you find that looks odd. . . . See that oyster-catcher?"

The oyster-catcher had alighted on his toes quite close to them. Rosamond looked at him, and forgot Flora.

But presently she remembered, and said, "It must be nearly breakfast time. We must go and dress."

"I'm not coming up," said William, "until I have found a chiton."

3

Rosamond went up from the beach. She met a great many people, all looking very well dressed in their Sunday costumes of dyed cloth or skin. Rosamond felt wet and bare and shy, and hurried by along small wood paths until she reached the Yams. Outside his house stood Mr. Albert Smith, who informed her that breakfast would be ready in ten minutes, and that he trusted she had slept well and felt better than when she had gone to bed last night. Rosamond had forgotten about last night, and how she had behaved in a manner not at all Smith, and she blushed and said that she had slept very well. Mr. Smith then inquired if she had been bathing, which Rosamond could not

help thinking rather stupid of him, as she was in her wet bathing suit.

She went in to where she had slept, and put on clothes and her white frock. She could not brush her teeth, as she had not got her toothbrush on the island, but she rubbed them with soap, combed her wet hair with a wooden comb which Mrs. Smith had lent her, and said her prayers, thanking God very much for her happy bathe and her beautiful island life, and asking Him to confer on her more virtue and good sense, and on Flora Smith every imaginable happiness, and, if it should prove possible and consonant with His plans, to be so very good as to cause Flora to conceive for her some regard, however mild.

She then went out into the veranda, where breakfast was laid. When the Albert Smiths and Thinkwells (except William) were assembled round the table, Mr. Smith said grace, and they sat down. Mrs. Smith poured out a beverage of hot water which had stood on some kind of leaf till it was green and bitter, and which she erroneously called "tea." They ate bread-fruit and roasted yams, honey, fish, and various kinds of fruits. The Thinkwells ate much more than usual, as one does on picnics.

"You seem to be quite recovered this morning, dear," said Mrs. Smith kindly to Rosamond, as Rosamond ate her third piece of bread-fruit and honey.

In the middle of breakfast William arrived, clad in white drill again, but looking very wet and sandy and tousled, and carrying his basin full of small sea creatures. He sat down without either having brushed his hair or said grace, merely remarking that he had seen on the beach what looked remarkably like a marine amblyrhynchus, and if so, Darwin had been wrong in

supposing this creature a native only of the Galapagos Archipelago.

"Darwin!" Mrs. Smith echoed. "Isn't he the man who was always wrong?"

"Comparatively seldom, I think," Mr. Thinkwell said. "Charles Darwin, the scientist, my son means."

"There is no reason whatever," said Mr. Smith, firmly, to his wife, "to believe that this man was of a wrong way of thought." He turned to Mr. Thinkwell. "Mrs. Smith means that the unhappy Catholic priest who sojourned with us for a short while some years since had much to say in condemnation of the teachings of Charles Darwin, who, he affirmed, was an atheist of the deepest dye. Unfavourable tradition about this scientist, therefore, has gone down among the Zachary Macaulays and others of low mental equipment who are infected by Catholic error. But Miss Smith maintained always that Darwin was an excellent person, who wrote admirable treatises on the lower forms of creation. No doubt he was a Protestant, which was why our misguided and unfortunate friend the priest condemned him. But that is no reason why *we* should fall into the same error."

Mr. Thinkwell remembered that, in 1855, the *Origin of Species* had not yet been published. It was quite a question what Miss Smith would have made of that. Mrs. Smith, looking confused, as she always did after having made a Roman Catholic remark, prayed Mr. Thinkwell to take some more food.

When they had all finished, they discussed how they would spend the day. Mr. Thinkwell said that, in the course of the day, a boat from the *Typee* would come to take him and his family back to the schooner, where they would collect such of their belongings as they would require for a short sojourn on the island, ar-

range their plans with Captain Paul, and return. The *Typee* was to go off to-day or to-morrow, finish her trading cruise among the islands, and return in ten days or a fortnight to pick up the Thinkwells and take them back to Tahiti, where they would make suitable arrangements for the transport of such of the inhabitants of Orphan Island as might desire removal. Mr. Thinkwell spoke with his usual precision, but for once his speech did not adequately reflect his thought. He felt that he was conceding too much to this notion of leaving the island, a romantic idea unworthy of a sociologist. What if a large number should desire removal? Where? To what? The cost, which he knew not who would defray, was the least of many difficulties. Delay, he trusted, would lead to a growth of common sense on this subject. Meanwhile, he trusted, in speech, that Mr. Smith would not allow him and his family to be a burden on their hospitality, but to shift for themselves as regarded food and lodging.

"Indeed," Mr. Smith said, "you would be no burden. But, if you would prefer it, I could arrange that an empty house, with service, could be put at your disposal. As to subsequent arrangements, I do not know that a vessel of any great size will be required. We are not contemplating the wholesale transportation of our little nation, you know!"

"You'll find the little nation are contemplating it, papa," said Flora. "No one is going to be left behind. I don't think!" (This was a vulgar expression she had picked up from the Orphans.)

"Your views, my child, were not, I believe, requested," said Mr. Smith, who took it out of his children as his mamma took it out of him. "You had better go now and take Miss Rosamond for a short

stroll before service. But you must walk very quietly; remember what day it is."

Flora rose impatiently, said, "Come on then, Rosamond," and the two girls went out into the woods together.

Mr. Smith said to Mr. Thinkwell, "A wild, pert girl indeed! I wish your little daughter may get no harm from her. I see it must be true what my mother has always said, that in Great Britain children are better behaved and more submissive to their elders than many of them, in this generation, are here. . . . But to return to our plans. I am not so shut off from the world as not to know that this is going to be an expensive business, the burden of which you cannot be expected to bear. In confidence, I wish you to know that we have a considerable store of pearls laid by (my mother saw to that, and gave me some idea of their value), more than enough, I should think, to cover any expense we are likely to be put to. It is understood, then, that you provide the necessary transport, while all costs are a Smith matter. Not a word, however, about the pearls to any one. Proceed as if you were doing everything. But I must really beg you to keep in mind that we—and particularly my mother—don't desire any widespread emigration of the common people. My mother, I ought to add, in confidence, regards with some misgiving the thought of leaving the island herself. She is very old, and the island is her home and her property, which she believes it would be a betrayal of her responsibilities to desert. She is, as you no doubt observed, a trifle confused in her mind as to her identity."

"I perceived," said Mr. Thinkwell, relief moving him to a jest, "that she seemed to regard herself as the late Queen Victoria. All the more reason why she

should wish to return to Great Britain. Well, every one will have to decide for himself and herself whether they go or stay. I observed that the old Scottish lady was eager to come."

"Jean's going," said Mr. Smith gravely, "will, of course, depend on my mother's. Jean knows her place and her duty too well to desert Miss Smith. . . . However, all this can be discussed later. I must tell you that at eleven o'clock we all assemble for divine service on the shore. To-morrow, when we are more at leisure, I should like to show you something of the island. You will, I think, be interested in some of our institutions and customs, particularly our parliament and laws. Sunday we keep very quietly, as you do in Great Britain, and I will, if you please, introduce you to our small library, where you may perhaps find something to interest you. . . . My dear boy, pray do not take your net out with you again to-day. We never fish on Sunday."

William looked disappointed. "Oh, is Sunday a close day for sea-fish here? I never heard of that before anywhere. What a pity. All right, I'll go and look for that amblyrhynchus. Come on, Charles."

4

Flora and Rosamond, the one in scarlet feathers for Sunday, the other in her white cotton frock, climbed a winding path up a thicketed slope. Humming birds darted about them, threading the green gloom with brightness. A mocking bird called from a mahogany tree; a bird of paradise flaunted its tail from a silver-leaved candle-nut. There were scents of pears, of cloves, of spices, of almonds hot in the sun. Giant iguanas they met, and tiny geckos; hurrying tortoises and quiet, drowsy monkeys; silent cock-

atoos and crying lizards; kind little scorpions, parrots perched on the coils of snakes, great crabs climbing palm trees and plundering the cocoa-nuts, plants that spurted at them milky juice which stung.

To Rosamond these sights, sounds, and scents were not surprising but natural, and it was Cambridge that was strange.

Flora, humming a tune, switched with a willow wand she carried at the flowers, trees, and birds. Rosamond once cried, "Oh—you hit the humming bird."

Flora turned on her her wide, amused stare.

"It likes it," she said, and resumed her little song.

So Flora too, like William, thought animals easily pleased.

They climbed up out of the thicket on to a small, rocky plateau, and here Flora stopped, and waved her switch nonchalantly at the sea below.

"A view," she said. "If you care for views."

And a view indeed it was. Huge, pale, landless, the Pacific stretched to a dazzling horizon, an ocean of shimmering silver haze. Nothing dotted it, to east or west, to south or north, only Orphan Island, and, anchored beyond the island's guarding reef, a little schooner.

What loneliness, in which time and space seemed drowned, God and man lost, sun, moon and earth a passing tumbler's show.

"A view," said Flora, indifferent and far away; and, sitting on thymy rock, they looked at it. The hot sweetness from the tangled wood rose about them, and all its sharp and liquid cries. Rosamond bit into a golden bread-fruit she had plucked.

"Have you loved?" asked Flora absently, chewing a root that tasted like liquorice, lounging sideways, her head upon her hand.

Oh, yes, Rosamond had very often and very greatly loved.

"Been *in* love, you understand?" Flora elucidated.

"A great many times," said Rosamond simply, mumblingly, her mouth full of bread-fruit.

"You mean," she added, after a swallow, "real people, not people in books?"

"In *books*? How could one love any one in a book? Loved, I said."

Rosamond began ticking off her passions on her fingers. People at school . . . Sir Ernest Shackleton, that Mr. Mallory who climbed up Everest, Mr. de la Mare, the Rajah in the *Green Goddess*, Hamlet, Miss Edith Evans, Joan of Arc, Gerald du Maurier, several athletes and naval men, seen from far. . . . Captain Paul, a little. . . . And now Flora. . . . Oh, yes, Rosamond had indeed loved.

"All those?" Flora questioned, watching the counting fingers. "Dear me, my dear, you have been a great lover already. I thought you half asleep—a child. And did they all love you?"

"Oh, no." Rosamond was shocked at the sacrilegious thought. "Oh, no. Scarcely any of them."

Flora looked at her. In her bright eyes was surprise, and a touch of amused disdain.

"You can love like that? Again and again, with no requital? I am sure *I* could not. Where would be the fun? Does it give you pleasure to love those who spurn you?"

"Well, they didn't exactly *spurn* me, you know. Not mostly. They just—for the most part—took no notice. They didn't really know I loved them, you see. . . . Yes, it does give me pleasure."

"You must have great self-control. I could not hide it, if I loved. You may have loved often, Rosa-

mond, but I can't believe you love so *much* as I do. You seem happy and calm. Love doesn't hurt and tear you."

"Oh, yes," said Rosamond, considering, and looking shyly at Flora's smooth, averted cheek, "it does sometimes."

"Oh, well. . . ." Flora tossed her chewed liquorice root from her, and yawned. "We're all different, I suppose. Other people are so odd compared with me, I never understand them. *You* are odd, Rosamond. But I think I rather like you."

(So much for saying one's morning prayers.)

"I think I will tell you about myself and Peter," Flora continued. "We love, you know. We have loved for over a year, and we mayn't marry, because of what I told you this morning on the beach. And I don't want to live with him *without* marriage, if we can avoid it, because every one makes such a fuss about that. We should be shut out of society, and Peter would lose all his chances of getting on in the world. Grandmamma says that people in England who do that are entirely ruined—no one decent will know them any more. Is that true?"

"I shouldn't think so," said Rosamond cautiously. "But I don't know; I don't believe people at Cambridge do it very much—I don't remember. It seems to be quite easy to get married there, there are so many clergymen, so I expect they do that instead. And Cambridge is the only place I know well. Charles would know about London, where I expect people do more of everything."

"Oh, well. When we get to England—it thrills me just to say the words—Peter and I can get married, I suppose, if there are so many clergymen. Grandmamma can't get hold of them all. . . . They want

me to marry my cousin George. Lord, what a plain, tedious fellow! Old, too. He's twenty-eight or nine. Would you marry any one as old as that?"

"I don't know," said Rosamond, thinking of it for the first time, "that I would marry any one at all. Unless perhaps an explorer, who let me come too. For one thing, there might be babies. They are a horrid result."

"Oh, well," said Flora, "they're a nuisance before they come, of course, but they are rather entertaining when they've arrived. I think I should rather like babies—in moderation."

"Would you? I don't mind them, but I wouldn't like to have one, it would be so awfully in the way. I can never see that they are any use. I'd have a puppy if I wanted anything of that sort. . . . But, as to being old, I don't believe we count people *old* in England till they're about thirty—not really old, you know. Charles says thirty is the great turning-point, and if you haven't done anything by then, you never will."

"Done anything! I think one's doing things all the time."

"So do I," said Rosamond. "But Charles, I think, means *written* something, or painted something, or invented something, or passed some law, or found a lost book in a library, or a new star, or made a tune, or swum the Channel, or become well-known somehow—the way people do, you know. When I'm thirty I shan't have done anything, of course, because I'm no good at anything. But I expect you will."

"Dear me, I'm sure I shan't. *I* don't want to spend my time looking for lost books or new stars, or passing laws either. When I'm thirty I shall be married, and going to parties and balls in London. I shan't live

in the country; country life and people must be most disagreeable. I can't endure the people in *Wuthering Heights*. I suppose they are like that at Cambridge too?"

"Not very, I don't think."

"Well, it's a vast pity you don't know London, for I want to hear all about it."

"I've *been* to London."

"Well, what do you like best there?"

"Theatres. And, next, the Zoo."

"Theatres! That's where people act, isn't it? Grandmamma has always taught us they are wicked. What's the Zoo?"

"Where the animals live."

"Oh, animals bore me. We have too many of them here. You and your brother William seem in love with animals. . . . I think you Thinkwells are a very droll family. There are the bells going; we must go down to service. I'm sure I don't know why we've had all this solemn talk, so early in the day. The effect of Sunday, perhaps. Shall we race down?"

They did so, leaping down the winding path, while the monkeys, all excitement, yelped, and the iguanas scuttled for cover, and the hummingbirds flurried about in a green and crimson cloud. Rosamond was left behind, and Flora waited for her at the foot of the slope.

"Now," said Flora, "we walk very sedately to service." She put on her Sunday hat of broad leaves trimmed with scarlet wings.

"Where's *your* hat, Rosamond?"

"At the Yams, I think. Do I need it?"

"Well, naturally, for church. Because, you know, of the angels—that's in the Bible, grandmamma says. But see, I will plait one for you." She pulled a number

of dark, broad, shining leaves from a bread-fruit tree, and plaited them nimbly in and out, until they formed a shallow basket, which she inverted over Rosamond's round yellow head.

"There! That will do for the angels. Do you like my frock?"

"It's beautiful."

"It took a long time to get all the feathers for it. See here, Rosamond, I have a fancy to change with you for to-day. I want to see what I feel like in English clothes. Will you?"

"Of course."

"Here, then, behind this mangrove clump. No one will see us."

Each took off her frock. Flora looked with interest at Rosamond's cami-knickers, Rosamond at Flora's under-petticoat of scarlet-dyed cocoa-nut cloth. Flora slipped into the short-sleeved, low-necked white cotton frock, Rosamond into the tunic made of the scarlet feathers of many birds. Neither altogether fitted, for the wearers were of different builds; Rosamond was small, firmly built, stocky, like a sturdy little boy, without feminine elegances, or any of Flora's wild-animal sinuousness.

"It suits you, my dear," said Flora. "How about me? Do I look well?"

Rosamond considered.

"Well, of course," she said, "you always do. But I like you best in the feathers. It's more like an island dress."

"That's no merit, you absurd girl. Quite the contrary. Now I look like an English young lady of fashion, I hope. Come, we shall be late."

5

They went down to the beach. Rosamond thought, "It is like in the Gospels," for the shore was dense with people sitting in rows to be taught and to pray.

Flora, very proud in her English dress, marched up to her family at the front. But Rosamond, in scarlet feathers and a leaf hat, felt shy, for all the Orphans stared at her, and, seeing Charles and William sitting on the sand at the end of a row near the back, she joined them. William stared at her, open-mouthed, and Charles smiled.

"Swopped with Flora," he murmured. "I shall swop with Heathcliff, and father with Mr. Smith. We will all be Orphans."

William nudged him. "Look! They'll be the convicts."

Behind them a gang of men and women marched up, roped together with palm cords and guarded by several stalwart men who had the air of constables. The convicts showed themselves as such by having closely-shaven heads and a peculiar odour. Otherwise they had no appearance of villainy.

On the raised grassy plateau at the edge of the wood stood the young clergyman, the Reverend Angus Maclean, his red head glowing in the shade of a palm tree, a cassock of black cloth roped about his waist. Round him were grouped what was, apparently, a choir, each with some instrument of music, such as bones, skin drums, flutes, and pipes. The noise of a voluntary was now proceeding from them.

"I thought they said it began at eleven," William grumbled impatiently. "It's ten minutes past; why can't they begin? Wasting a perfectly good Sunday morning like this. . . ."

A lady in front of them turned round and said "Hush!" kindly. She thought the Thinkwells very barbarian. A moment later she turned again and added, "We are waiting for Miss Smith."

Even as she spoke, Miss Smith's palanquin, borne by four Zachary Macaulays, appeared between the trees. The congregation rose to its feet, and "God save the Queen" was sung. Miss Smith was placed, still in her palanquin, by the side of the clergyman, and Mr. Maclean began, sonorously, with his faint North British accent, "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed. . . ." He went on to "Dearly beloved brethren," and the confession and absolution, and so through the whole office of matins as said or sung in Anglican churches, which Miss Smith, it seemed, had known and imparted to her flock quite thoroughly. The only part they omitted was the psalter for the day of the month. As to the lessons from the Bible, these were not, indeed, recited verbatim, but Mr. Albert Smith related, with approximate accuracy, the story of Moses in the bulrushes, and another gentleman, also of Smith appearance, that of the barren fig-tree. The congregation were, for the most part, stolid and Anglican, and did not appear to be listening much. But three separate tendencies among different sections were noted with interest by Mr. Thinkwell. Some looked deliberately and painstakingly sceptical; some showed furtive impulses towards ritualistic or Roman Catholic habits, and others towards dissenting ejaculations, such as "Hear, hear," or "Very true." The Zachary Macaulays showed both these two last tendencies, having, presumably, inherited Evangelical habits from their forefathers of the early nineteenth century, and acquired papistical ones from the Jesuit missionary.

All these aberrations from strict Anglicanism were firmly suppressed by the sidesmen, who patrolled the congregation with sharp eyes and ears.

"Human nature," Mr. Thinkwell wrote in his note-book, "seems much the same here as elsewhere as regards religious self-expression. How much is due (*a*) to primitive nature; (*b*) to heredity; (*c*) to training?"

Some of the ejaculatory tendency might certainly be laid to the door of training, for the leader of that school was old Jean, who sat in front, and ever and anon said loudly, "Aymen to that," or "Verra true, verra true," or, more occasionally, "Hoots!" or "Havers!" Miss Smith had, apparently, failed in seventy years to make a good Episcopalian of Calvinist Jean. The sidesmen passed her by, presumably as too old for reform, or too much respected for rebuke—after all, had she not spanked them all?

The Orphans settled themselves for the sermon. The clergyman gave out the text he had received from Miss Smith. "And the Lord said unto Adam, Be thou content with the garden which I have given thee, and see thou run not after every new thing."

"*Did* the Lord say that unto Adam?" Charles whispered to Rosamond, who whispered back, "I don't think so." Charles mused on Miss Smith's Bible, and its infinite opportunities. It must have proved all these years a rich treasure house of apposite counsels and strictures on Orphan national life.

The sermon to-day was about content, and how we should be resigned to the stations in which it has pleased God to place us. The preacher deplored the restless, sensational spirit of the age, for ever seeking after some new excitement, longing to run over the world at large instead of patiently staying where put.

. . . This sermon can well be imagined. Mr. Thinkwell wondered whether Miss Smith had supplied merely the main treatment, or the detail and phraseology also. Through the palm screens of her palanquin, the old lady could be seen sitting, podgy and inscrutable, her hands folded on her stomach, giving now and then an approving nod.

"And now," said the preacher, not, however, turning eastward, for Miss Smith in her youth had not heard of such a piece of ritual, and would have scorned it if she had.

A hymn was sung—"All things bright and beautiful." During it, the sidesmen carried round turtle shells, into which the congregation dropped pieces of coral and various kinds of shells which they used as money. When it came to William, he saw among the rest a chiton, of the type he required, and, forgetting where he was, he remarked, "Oh, good!" and picked it out. The sidesman took it from him and replaced it, with a stern, cold stare. "If you have nothing to contribute, sir," he whispered, "kindly pass the plate, which is for puttings in, not takings out."

William, confused, plunged his hand into his sandy trousers pocket and pulled out a small damp dead star-fish, smelling strongly of dead star-fish, which he dropped into the plate and passed it to Charles, who, trying to look as if William were not related to him, put in a sixpence. Rosamond found nothing in the pocket of Flora's tunic but a small vermillion shell, with which she had seen Flora reddening her lips, and, not liking to offer up this, she passed the plate.

Mr. Thinkwell, who was at the moment when the plate was offered him making a note on the sermon in his pocket-book, did not even see it; he was a man, like many Cambridge men, of one occupation at a

time. So, except for Charles (and his contribution was not, at the moment, of much use), it cannot be said that the Thinkwell family came well out of this affair of the collection.

There followed a blessing, another voluntary, and the congregation dispersed.

Miss Smith, sitting in her palanquin beneath a palm-tree, then held a small court. Members of the extensive Smith family gathered about her, respectfully greeting her and passing the time of day with one another. Mr. Albert Smith brought Mr. Thinkwell and his family to join the gathering, as Miss Smith desired a little talk with them.

"So, Thinkwell," said the old lady, peering at him from behind her curtains, "though you are, as we learn from our daughter Adelaide, an atheist (as I dare say your grandfather was before you), you attended Divine Service. We trust you profited by it."

"Indeed, I trust so."

"An atheist," Miss Smith repeated, nodding her head twice, with pursed lips. "The fool who said in his heart, there is no God. . . . But I suppose you don't believe the Scriptures, Thinkwell. You are the Schismatick of the old poem—how does it go—we used to know it, and taught it to the Orphans, but our memory is poor these days. . . . Denis, say it."

She turned to a smallish, middle-aged man with ginger whiskers and merry eyes—obviously a Smith, but a Smith with a difference; a Smith (could it be?) of the O'Malley stamp.

"The Schismatick, mamma? Oh, yes . . .

> "He talked among other pretty things
> That the *Book of Kings*
> Small Comfort brings
> To the Godly:

Besides he had some Grudges
Against the *Book of Judges,*
And talked of *Leviticus* oddly.
But *Wisdom* most of all
He held *Apocryphal. . . .*"

"That will do, Denis." Miss Smith addressed the little gay, red-haired man testily, as if he were not sympathetic to her. But Mr. Thinkwell looked on him with more liking than he felt for his brother Albert Edward. If he were not mistaken, here was the reprobate Irish doctor over again. His watery green eye had a pleasant twinkle, and his mouth was quick to smile. His face was reddened with sun and (probably) fermented liquor . . . after all, that tendency was in both his parents.

"How's that," said Miss Smith, "for a picture of the unscriptural man, for ever picking holes in religion? Don't know who wrote it, but my papa used to say it to us."

"A pseudo John Cleveland," Charles murmured, for he always knew things like that.

Miss Smith yawned.

"What did you think of the sermon, Thinkwell?"

"A little commonplace, perhaps," said Mr. Thinkwell, a man of truth.

"Indeed!" Miss Smith looked displeased. "Perhaps you find the Holy Scriptures commonplace. Perhaps you desire wit and fancy to titillate your palate at Divine Service. Perhaps plain truth seems to you a milk and water beverage. Fie, sir, fie; you should be ashamed to own it. This morning's sermon was one of our best, and singularly apt to the occasion. I hope all our people profited by it. Angus delivered it very well, too, so we thought. Didn't he, Jean?"

"Ay, ma'am, the laddie didna speak ill." But old

Jean was looking sour, and those who had sat near her during the sermon could have testified that several times she had ejaculated "Havers."

"Well," said Miss Smith, yawning again, "dinner's at three. Some one will give you some, no doubt. Till then you can do as you please. There's our little library at your service, if you want some quiet Sunday reading. We must ask you to remember what day it is, if you please, and not to do anything unseemly on it." She peered at William, who stood, wet and sandy and tousled, turning over the crabs in his pockets. Her scrutiny then fell on Rosamond.

"Oh, indeed! Dressed up in feathers, are we? Why is that, if you please?"

"Well, you see, Flora and I changed."

"Flora and you. . . . D'you mean to say that that young baggage is wearing your gown? Upon my soul! Where is she? Bertie, where's that girl of yours?"

"I don't know, mamma. She went off after service somewhere."

"Went off somewhere! Yes, that's the way. When *I* was a girl, I wasn't allowed to go off after service somewhere, I can tell you. It was home to the parsonage I went, to read the life of a missionary and help get the cold dinner ready. *I* didn't go gallivanting off dressed up in some one else's clothes. It's with that young scamp Nogood Conolly she's gone, of course. Why didn't *you* go with her, George?"

George, a solid and not ill-looking young man in a large Smith style, said, "Don't know, grandmamma. She was too quick."

"Well, go and find her. Don't stand there like a stuck pig. . . . What that girl wants is a good whipping, and that's just what she don't get, I'll be bound."

She glared at her son Bertie and her daughter-in-law Anna.

"Dear, dear," said Mrs. Albert Smith nervously, "girls are teasing, ain't they! You never know what they'll do next, do you, Mr. Thinkwell?"

"It is difficult," said Mr. Thinkwell, who always thought that people asked him very odd and foolish questions, "to be absolutely certain what any one will do next. Even oneself. But I should have thought that *never* was a strong expression in this matter. Suppose, for instance, that I were to raise my fist suddenly close to my daughter's face, I think I might say that I should *almost* know she would make a movement of withdrawal. But even that would be subject to . . ."

Mr. Thinkwell was unlike most persons in that, when asked a question, he endeavoured, if he answered it at all, to answer it accurately. This is, of course, among the tiresome habits, and they did not care for it on Orphan Island any more than elsewhere. The proper answer to Mrs. Smith's inquiry was "No indeed," or "That's right," or some other form signifying general agreement. Charles, perceiving that his father was being tiresome, interrupted with "There's the boat coming in for us."

"Hey! The boat, did he say?" Miss Smith peered from her palanquin towards the glaring, shimmering sheet of haze, the Pacific at noon. "No boats on Sunday!"

"It's all right, mamma, it's their own boat," her son Denis told her, but she waved him aside.

"No landings allowed here on Sunday, Thinkwell. It's a law. Send 'em away."

"I am afraid I can hardly do that. You see, we have to go out to the schooner and fetch a few things we shall need for our stay here."

Miss Smith grunted. Mr. Albert Smith stepped to

the fore, bland and firm, and took the situation in hand. One saw why he was, on the island, after his mamma, the Smith in chief.

"Now, mamma, it is more than time you went in for your rest. Everything will be quite all right, I assure you. We must not inconvenience our good friends here by depriving them of access to their schooner. I am very sure that they will not for a moment allow themselves to forget what day of the week it is. Now then, you Zacharies, up with the chair, and off with you back to Balmoral."

Miss Smith, who was really very sleepy, took this with no remonstrance beyond a grunt. But, as the Zacharies bore her away, her face appeared once more between the curtains.

"Jean!" she called. "Don't linger behind."

The old Scotswoman, muttering to herself, hobbled after her mistress.

6

The boat had brought Captain Paul and Mr. Merton, eager to see a little more of the island life, which they found very entertaining, before they left it. They proposed to stay on shore while the Thinkwells were rowed back to the schooner to collect such things as they wanted. At his own request Mr. Denis Smith accompanied the Thinkwells; he had, he said, a great curiosity to see the schooner. They found him a merry companion. The position of the Smith family in this world was not to him a heaven-ordained status, but a very fortunate piece of humbug.

"I don't know," he said, "how we've managed to keep it up all this time; it's been a near thing once or twice, and it couldn't have gone on much longer, I think. Too much new thought about. The Orphans

wouldn't have gone on standing it more than a few years—and then where should we have been? Lucky business for us Smiths that you came when you did. But I don't know how we're going to like mixing in the world on equal terms with our neighbors, some of us. I shall enjoy seeing Bertie. . . . But as to poor old mamma!" He pursed up his lips in a soundless whistle. "If we ever get her there," he added.

"Thinks she's Queen Victoria, y'know. That's what poor mamma thinks. If she gets to England she'll want to go straight to the Palace. And she'll find Queen Victoria's dead—you said so, didn't you, and no wonder—and a king on the throne, and herself nothing but a humble old lady rather queer in the head and thirsty in the mouth. Then there'll be a rumpus. Mamma settle down as a humble old lady? I don't think! She's been Miss Smith" (he bowed his head) "of Smith Island too long for that, and she don't mean to climb down without making trouble." He chuckled.

"Perhaps," suggested Mr. Thinkwell, "she can console herself by writing her memoirs, which every one will want to read."

"Oh, Lord, she's written 'em. Kept a journal all these years, mamma has. Till a few years ago, anyhow. I can show it you if you'd care."

"Indeed I should, very much. But how has she managed for writing materials?"

"Oh, we have something we use for writing—a dark liquid we get from the cuttlefish. And we write on bark, you know. But I believe mamma began her journal on the blank edges of some Latin book she had, or that my father had, and between the lines of print. I will ask her if I may show it you this afternoon, with the other books. By the way, you must all dine with me at three."

Mr. Thinkwell noted that the island still maintained early Victorian hours.

They collected their things from the *Typee* and rowed back. Mr. Thinkwell then arranged his plans with Captain Paul. The *Typee,* after completing its trading cruise among the other islands, was to call again at Orphan Island for the Thinkwells (and possibly a few others, if any cared to be of the party) and take them away. At the first possible opportunity suitable transport would be sent to the island. Meanwhile, not a word must be said during the voyage of its existence. Captain Paul and Mr. Merton must take all precautions that the crew did not divulge the secret. Mr. Thinkwell was averse from notoriety if it could at all be avoided. As secrecy at this stage fell in with the trade plans of both Captain Paul and Mr. Merton, they readily made the necessary promises.

They then somewhat reluctantly tore themselves away from the pleasures of the island—Captain Paul especially enjoying its female society and Mr. Merton its drinks—and departed from its shores, undertaking to be back within about ten days.

The Thinkwells then accompanied Mr. Denis Smith to his estate some way back up the hill, and here they sat down to a large and delightful dinner, to which they did ample justice, for, owing to the unusual lateness of the hour, they were sharp-set, except Rosamond, who had, one way or another, managed to eat a good deal during the morning. She had gathered, during her walk before church, a great variety of luscious fruits, some of which she had eaten on the hill, some during the sermon, and the rest afterwards on the shore. She particularly liked the mango and the bread-fruit, both of which were, when ripe in the sun, round and golden and warm and very filling.

CHAPTER XIV

THE JOURNAL

I

During dinner, Mr. Denis Smith, who was a widower with married children, entertained the Thinkwells very well with his conversation and anecdotes of island life, and afterwards he offered to conduct Mr. Thinkwell to Balmoral, where he would have access to the island books. The young people said they would like to explore the island.

"You must do it quietly, mind," said their host. "We're very particular about Sunday here, as perhaps you've noticed. No games allowed. I dare say you'll pick up some one to show you round."

The Thinkwells said they would prefer not to trouble any one, but would like to explore for themselves. So they set off up the wooded hill, William with his butterfly-net and field glasses, Rosamond with her bathing dress, for this Sunday had not so far panned out so well as she had intended with regard to bathing and she felt that this must be remedied.

Mr. Thinkwell and Mr. Denis Smith arrived at Balmoral, and the latter, going within for a short time, reappeared with four tattered volumes bound together with string, together with a bundle of sheets of thin bark.

"Our library," he said; "including mamma's journal, which she has consented to your reading. Now, where will you read?"

Mr. Thinkwell selected a shady corner of the woods,

beneath a spreading banian tree, and settled himself for a comfortable Sunday afternoon. Mr. Smith left him, to pay a visit to a married daughter and her new baby.

2

An odd collection, indeed, thought Mr. Thinkwell, turning the pages of the dilapidated copy of *Wuthering Heights*. This strange, storm-ridden epic of Yorkshire, this wild vision of the lonely parson's daughter, was all the presentment that the Orphans had of family life in England. On this domestic tale they were reared; its odd, savage, lonely beings seemed to them typical English men, women, and children. How surprised, how relieved, they would be on arriving in England! (If, indeed, they should ever, by mischance, arrive there.) Perhaps they were already surprised, at the comparatively composed, cheerful, and amiable manners of their visitors from Cambridge. Or possibly they thought that the one represented town life, the other country. Or, more likely still, these islanders had as much good sense as dwellers in other countries, and knew that people in books were a strange race apart.

Then there was the *Holy War*. An odder society still! Mr. Thinkwell turned the pages at random, opening on the trial of the Diabolonians, with Mr. Know-All witnessing against Mr. Lustings, and Mr. Hate-Lies against Mr. Forget-Good.

"My lord, I have heard this Forget-Good say that he could never abide to think of goodness, no, not for a quarter of an hour.

"*Clerk:* Where did you hear him say so?

"*Hate-Lies:* In *All-Base Lane*, at a house next door to the sign of the *Conscience-seared-with-a-hot-iron.*

"Then said the Clerk, Come, Mr. *Tell-True,* give in your evidence concerning the Prisoner at the bar, about that for which he stands here, as you see, indicted by this honourable Court.

"*Tell-True:* My Lord, I have heard him often say, he had rather think of the vilest thing than of what is contained in the Holy Scriptures.

"*Clerk:* Where did you hear him say such grievous words?

"*Tell-True:* Where? In a great many places, particularly in *Nauseous Street,* in the house of one *Shameless,* and in *Filth Lane,* at the sign of the *Reprobate,* next door to the *Descent into the Pit.*"

And so on, and so on. This, no doubt, was the Orphans' idea of an English law court. "Poor, crude stuff," said Mr. Thinkwell, whose distaste for John Bunyan was only very slightly modified by his having lived two centuries ago. He took up next a small volume entitled *Mixing in Society, or Everybody's Book of Correct Conduct.* Here, decided Mr. Thinkwell, was Miss Smith's Bible of Manners, the code which summed her attitude toward life and conduct. Even in the raging storm she had clasped this volume to her bosom (and that in preference to the Bible of the Jews) before she consigned herself to the deep. Mr. Thinkwell opened it at random, and saw passages heavily scored. It was divided into different sections—the Duties of Life, the Pleasures of Life, Dress and the Toilet, the Studious Part of Life, the Formation of Habit, Conversation, Letters, the Heart and Conscience, and so on. Under each heading and subheading was set forth the correct path to pursue and the incorrect. Mr. Thinkwell learnt that it is the

correct thing to marry for love; to appear fully dressed in the morning, but in a totally different style from that adopted in the evening; to choose at meals what is already on the table unless it is positively disagreeable to you; not to betray that you do not care about your dinner-partner; to eat and drink with moderation at dinner, but to remember that this is the repast *par excellence* and to treat it as such; it is *not* correct, however, to let your host see that you have only come for the food. It is never correct for ladies to walk unaccompanied in London, except to church, nor for gentlemen to make use of classical quotations in the presence of ladies without apologising for or translating them (this was heavily scored). Gentlemen should remember that ladies are not interested in politics, and religion is a subject which should never be introduced in general society, as it is the topic upon which persons are least likely to preserve their temper. ("I notice no particular signs that Miss Smith has studied that rule," said Mr. Thinkwell.) As to books, it is the correct thing to remember that there are books which blight and destroy the mind and soul (underlined, and commented on with a pencilled "Indeed yes!") On the next page, Mr. Thinkwell read that the most refined pronunciation of English was taught at Eton and Oxford. As he himself had been taught English at Rugby and Cambridge, he perceived that this book was foolish, and put it away.

The fourth book was a calf-bound Martial, and bore the name Daniel O'Malley on its fly-leaf. It was not, obviously, among those of the doctor's books which Miss Smith had thought it her duty to destroy, or to seclude from the public eye, as its improprieties (which she had doubtless suspected) wore the decent screen of a tongue which she had resolutely refused to

allow the doctor to teach to his children or to the orphans. No; Miss Smith had taken Martial and redeemed it to good uses, by using its blank pages, its wide margins, and the spaces between its epigrams for her pencilled journal, the first entry of which was dated January the first, 1856.

"We are come, by the mercy of heaven, to the beginning of another year. Through what perils, what trials, have we been preserved! How strange it seems to reflect on the peaceful tenour of my life this time a year ago! I have indeed been led along strange paths, and can only say, Marvellous are Thy ways, O Lord! Here we are, myself, Jean Fraser, Dr. O'Malley, and thirty-eight helpless orphan children (for two, alas, have perished of colic, having eaten poisonous berries. What loud calls are these, O Lord!) cast up on this abandoned reef, which yet has bounteously supplied us with the necessities of life, and here, it seems, we are for the present to make our home. The coming in of another year has occasioned in me much *solemn thought*. I could wish that the doctor had more sense of, and awe of, his Creator. *He* saw the New Year in in a condition I scarcely like to mention on paper. And Jean, alas, saying that it was Hogmanay, also partook too deeply of what the doctor had brewed. For my part, I refused even to sip the stuff, but retired early to rest, after solemn prayer.

"The doctor gives no time to prayer, but, when he is not employing himself in practical labours (besides fishing and killing birds for food, he is building shelters, or houses, for us to live in, also a boat), when not thus employed he eats, drinks, and amuses himself, and experiments with the fermentation of liquor from the palm trunks and the juice of various fruits. I fear he is a sad atheist. When sober he mocks at Catholi-

cism as much as at Protestantism. And yet at any moment he, or any of us, may be called to our last account!"

There followed from time to time throughout January and February entries recording details of the island life; new foods discovered, different ways of cooking turtle meat, the making of cocoa-nut cloth ("so strangely and mercifully provided for us") into garments for the children, the use of the candle-nut for lighting (it was not until some years later that they began to make candles and soap of cocoa-nut grease) expeditions about the lagoon in the boat which the doctor had made, the sight of sharks. ("Dear God, with what *dangers* hast Thou thought meet to surround us!") The use of beaten-out bark for fabric was mentioned in March. Dr. O'Malley, Mr. Thinkwell observed, had obviously been a man of ingenuity and resource.

Miss Smith also recorded the instructions which she and Jean imparted to the children, who were being taught reading, writing, arithmetic, history, geography, and the Scriptures, with the help of the sand as a blackboard and the pliant switches of the mahogany tree as correctives.

Then, in April, came the entry. "The Doctor has asked me for my hand. I do not feel that I can consider such a proposition from such a man. I cannot believe that God intends that our lives, so *different* in Purpose and Outlook, should be thus united. He cares for *none* of the things I hold sacred, and, indeed, makes mock of them. I have told him that it can *never be*."

A little later. "The Doctor still persists in begging for my Hand and Heart. He has shaken me by saying, and, indeed, making me see, that our life together on this island, unsanctioned by Matrimony, is *compromis-*

ing to the last degree. Heavens! if, when we shall be rescued, the world speaks against my reputation! How could I bear that! Consulted Jean in the matter. Jean says I am bound to do it in the end, so the sooner the better. I know not what to do. I can but earnestly seek guidance from Above. If only my dear papa were here to advise me! I know only too well what would be his opinion of the doctor, but what would he think of my *position here* as the doctor's unmarried companion? And would he, perhaps, say that it was my duty to become this unfortunate man's wife, in order that I may both preserve my reputation and redeem him from drink?"

A week later. "Have consented to marry the Doctor. Hope our Union may be blest. We shall be married in the Scottish way, before two witnesses and without a Clergyman, which seems very odd and sad, but there is no other way. We have fixed the day for June the first."

The record for June 1st was brief. "Married the Doctor."

In the course of that year the journal began to make more mention of the various beverages prepared by the doctor, and their recipes were noted. Miss Smith, as Mrs. O'Malley, was not becoming any less religious, but she seemed to be growing more earthly.

"This drink is *excellent,* and most *stimulating,*" she noted sometimes, after a recipe.

Then began the births of the children. The first was Caroline, who had a strong look of her father—("I pray it may be only in face"). Almost from the first it was apparent that Miss Smith's children were carefully kept apart from the Orphans, trained, as it were, for a different station in life. She had been, obviously, a zealous and devoted mother, though severe in repri-

mand and chastisement. Spare the rod and spoil the child was her motto with her own offspring as well as with the Orphans, but, together with the rod and with much moral teaching as to humility and obedience, she had administered to her children precepts as to their superiority in station over the children about them. They were ladies and gentlemen, and must never demean themselves. They were not allowed to mix with the poor little riff-raff from East London. Very early, they were presented with little plots of land, and taught to cultivate them, for, wrote Miss Smith, the Almighty has given us the earth in order that we may produce the fruits thereof. But gradually the system seemed to change, and it appeared that the actual cultivation of the land was all done by the Orphans, though it belonged to the Smiths. "I think it very important," wrote Miss Smith, "that my children should be instructed young in their duties as employers of labour, and learn to exercise authority over, and kindness towards, those beneath them."

There were some painful entries.

"Discovered the Doctor, quite drunk, teaching Latin verses out of this very book (which he calls *epigrams*) and phrases out of the Roman prayerbook, to Carrie and William. Remonstrated with him, but it was of little use in his state of intoxication. Whipped the children, and told them they were never to listen to their papa when he said things in Latin to them, and were to forget all they had learnt. They cried heartily, and I do not think will forget the lesson."

There were also reprimands recorded for undue familiarity with the Orphans, and punishments to the Orphans for impertinence to their little betters.

Occasionally, and with increasing frequency, there was scrawled an almost illegible entry, which Mr.

Thinkwell imagined to have been inscribed with a hand unsteady through excess.

By the time the journal had reached the *Liber de Spectaculis* the pencil had given out, and a dark brown liquid was used, apparently with a fine quill. Miss Smith had the sloping, flowing hand of the ladies of her period, and often crossed and recrossed, working her entries in between the epigrams, sometimes even between two lines of one epigram, which had the effect of contrasting, occasionally very curiously, the remarks of Miss Smith and those of Martial.

Mr. Thinkwell observed with interest the record of the birth of Albert Edward, in 1863—"a fine Boy, whom I shall name after our dear Prince."

A few years later, marriages began among the elder orphans, which were duly recorded.

On the 25th of March, 1870, in a hand much disturbed, came the entry, "What a day has this been! I can scarcely write of it. A day of the most fearful Revelations—revelations to me so *shocking* that I cannot, nay I will not, set them down. They were followed by a terrible judgment on that unhappy man who has wronged me so deeply, and who has now been called, all unfit, to face his Creator. O Lord, what Judgments are Thine! A shark—I can scarcely pen the horrid words—has ate the Doctor. He has been called away suddenly, without preparation, in strong liquor, insults to his wife" ("his wife" was erased, and "me" written over it) "hot upon his lips. What these insults were I can never repeat. I can only say that my duty is now plain—to forget the Doctor as soon as may be. The Orphans shall again call me Miss Smith, and my children shall bear that name, and I will obliterate these shocking years from my life. When I reflect that my unhappy children are——"

Here a word was thickly blotted out, and the sentence left unfinished. "Of Jean, who knew all the time, I can never think the same again," the day's entry concluded, leaving Mr. Thinkwell somewhat puzzled. What, he wondered, had occurred to upset the good lady so much—beyond, of course, the untimely death of her husband?

It was from this time on that Mr. Thinkwell thought he observed in the journal (which now, having finished Martial, began on large, thin, smooth pieces of bark) the beginnings of that megalomania which had grown, through Miss Smith's latter years, to such strange proportions. The didactic and domineering tone always observable became more marked.

In September, 1870, she wrote, "It is more than time that we had a Minister of God's Word among us. Began to give more particular instruction in Church Doctrine to some of the elder lads. The Scottish, I find, are the readiest to apprehend these matters. In particular, Donald Maclean, a very intelligent young man now turned two-and-twenty, shows a great aptness. Have had to prohibit Jean afresh from speaking to the Orphans of Theology, as I learn that she has been imparting Calvinist Doctrine."

There followed, in the entries throughout the next two months, references to the progress of Donald Maclean in theological studies, till, in November, "To-day I ordained Donald Maclean a Deacon. I hope Almighty God, knowing that we have, nor can have, no Bishop among us, will extend His mercies to this Ordination and cause this young man to be a *Clergyman indeed.* I cannot be mistaken in feeling that He has endowed me with *special powers* to this end. For it cannot be the Almighty's Will that we should continue without the Rites of the Church, and

with all these unblest Marriages, which monthly become more frequent as the Orphans reach adult years, and which have had hitherto to be solemnised in the Scottish manner, before two witnesses. From henceforth we shall not lack a Pastor. He will, of course, lead in future our Sunday Worship, and preach a sermon on Sunday morning. I shall supply him with the text and matter myself. This will save my voice, which I find gets strained with so much teaching and speaking."

By Christmas of the same year, which struck Mr. Thinkwell, though indeed he knew little of such matters, as surely a little soon, "Ordained Donald a Priest."

Meanwhile there were references to another youth who, it seemed, had received medical instruction from Dr. O'Malley, and was now the island doctor.

So the record went on. Babies were born and baptized; Miss Smith's ten children fell ill, recovered, behaved ill, were chastised, uttered remarks deemed noteworthy by a maternal heart. Particularly prone to this was Albert Edward, a lad of great promise, sagacity and virtue.

As each of her brood turned fifteen, Miss Smith had apparently presented him or her with a large piece of land (subject to her own proprietorship) so that by the year 1885 the whole island was partitioned out among the Smith family, but worked by Orphans, who gathered its fruits and preserved its birds for the benefit of the owner.

"The rise of a landed class," Mr. Thinkwell commented. "Very interesting indeed."

Strict property laws were obviously made early, and repressive measures instituted against those who broke them. The "rights of picking" might be rented by the

landowner to any one they chose, and these included the rights of selling, provided that a heavy commission of fruits, cocoa-nuts, cocoa-nut cloth, fish, and game, was paid to the landlord. During the first years, the system of direct exchange in kind appeared to have exclusively prevailed, but as time went on a shell, coral, and pearl currency took its place. But, to tell the truth, Miss Smith's references to the commercial system of the islanders were so casual and incidental that its development was not at all clear to Mr. Thinkwell. She seemed to take it for granted, and woman-like, was more interested in the personal lives of her flock, and in the various phases of mental development through which they passed. She deplored certain lawless tendencies among them. Discontent with the land laws cropped up from time to time, and this she described as "very shocking and Jacobinical." Occasionally there was a riot, which had to be dealt with severely by the police, a body early called into being.

"This amazing disregard of the Laws of God and Man," Miss Smith wrote, "must be very firmly dealt with, or who knows where it may end? The Court has sentenced the rioters to a month's confinement with compulsory labour, after which they are to be let loose on probation."

"The Court" had been, apparently, instituted some time earlier, to try to judge offenders. For Miss Smith, with all her natural autocracy, had been still, in her middle years, a devout upholder of the constitution.

"I am endeavouring, with God's help," she wrote, "to model my Island on British lines, keeping in mind the great Charter of our Liberties. I think it of the utmost importance to give the male Orphans a sense of civic Responsibility, and I have therefore created a House of Parliament, which shall consist of twenty-

one of the most steady and virtuous Orphans, as well, of course, as my own four Sons, who will be their natural Leaders. Caroline says, why should not *she,* the eldest of the Family, be there, and I had to discourse to her at some length on the different functions of *Man* and *Woman* in the scheme of Creation, and how it would not be fitting that the gentler and frailer Sex should take an active part in the male arts of Government. She replied, 'But *you* do, Mamma!' and I had to explain to her the peculiar Position to which God had called me. I fear she gets no more docile as time goes by, and her desire for marriage with Conrad Rimski does not abate."

But, a month later. "Have given my consent to Carrie's engagement to Conrad Rimski. It grieves me, but, after all, my Children *must marry some one,* if the Family is not to die out, and an unhappy fate has made it impossible that they should wed within their own Class. Rimski is a respectable enough young man, in spite of his origins (he is the son of a Polish street singer) and, in accepting him as my Son-in-law, I must also accept him as a Gentleman, and endeavour to teach him the manners of Superior Society. A refined and correct pronunciation I have always endeavoured to impart to these poor children, without, however, entire success, for many of them were thoroughly practised in the vulgar speech of their infancy before they came under my care. One thing I shall insist on: my Daughters must all retain their Family Name, and Carrie will be Mrs. Smith-Rimski, so that their children may never forget that they are of the Smith Caste. Conrad will now, of course, become in a sense a Land-owner, but he must not be allowed to forget that he is only, so to speak, a *Consort,* and that the land is really Caroline's. I believe that the

young people truly love one another, and I pray that I am making a wise decision in allowing the match."

That was in 1880, and from then on the alliances of the Smith sons and daughters occurred with frequency. Miss Smith became a grandmother, and had much to record of that. She was not altogether satisfied with the wife selected by Albert Edward, who became affianced in 1888 to the handsome young daughter of a Spanish orphan—the first to have married on the island. This young woman, Anna Gomez, Miss Smith thought un-English, and suspected her father, who had been nine years old on coming to the island, and who had been bred in Soho, of having taught her popery. However, she was placid and sweet-tempered, and Miss Smith made the best of it, merely recording a resolve to keep a particularly careful watch over the children of the match.

Not long after this time, the diarist had sadly to record a shocking wave of religious unrest among the younger generation of Orphans, those born about 1870 and later.

"It is hardly credible," she wrote, "that, surrounded as we are by every mark of the Almighty's beneficent Care, *Atheism* should show its horrid head. But so, alas, it is. I find that only too many of the young people just grown up are questioning the very Existence of their Creator, and refusing to attend Divine Service. I have instituted, with the approval of the Court of Justice, a system of heavy fines, which will, I trust, soon cure this Disease. In extreme cases, sterner measures will be taken."

There were complaints, too, of fashions in dress, which, on the part of the younger females, were becoming immodest and suggestive. . . .

"Dear me!" Mr. Thinkwell commented. "Dear me!

They have actually got hold of that foolish use of 'suggestive' for too scanty, here, too. I had not known it was used in that sense so early as 1855. Or perhaps it was not; possibly Miss Smith evolved it for herself. Very interesting parallels there are, to be sure."

He detected parallels even to the European æsthetic movement, in "There is a *mincing* habit I do not care for arising among the younger people—a loss of true Manliness and true Womanliness, a kind of *Affectation,* which affects me very disagreeably. Some of the young men waste a great deal of their time drawing pictures in the sand, and even writing verses! Though, as they are acquainted with so little poetry, they have no idea of how to do this. The same young men affect a kind of personal elegance which is far from manly, oiling themselves all over continually, and some even *wearing flowers behind their ears.* This species of 'adornment' I have found it necessary to forbid. I am distressed to find that Hindley, Caroline's eldest boy, is one of the leaders in this foolishness."

A little later (this was in 1895) Miss Smith had to dissolve parliament because its sumptuary decrees and its attitude towards unmarried unions did not satisfy her, and superintend a general election, which apparently produced a legislative body more to her mind.

"A very Cromwell," reflected Mr. Thinkwell admiringly.

Then came the great excitement of the landing of the Jesuit missionary and his West Africans. Miss Smith was naturally a good deal disturbed by his advent, and by the possible effects of his persuasions on the minds of her flock; he, for his part, was, equally naturally, convinced that here was an island of perishing souls, and took every step to impart the true doctrine to these poor people. Miss Smith, to circumvent

the Scarlet Woman, had to exercise a stern and anxious vigilance, which was not even ended by the entry, after six months. "The unhappy papist was killed last night in a quarrel about the validity of our Orders, and was afterwards devoured by his ignorant and unbridled blacks. Alas, that he had taught them a religion which permitted of such deeds! Had he but kept them true to the Faith of that great and good Man after whom they were named, his remains would not have met with such a fearful end. Fearful is Thy Wrath, O Lord, and terrible Thy judgments! The poor man has gone to his last Account steeped in error, and fresh from imparting his error to the innocent Lambs of this Flock. We cannot even bury him; we can but leave his soul, without much hope, to the *possible* Mercies of God. I pray that he has not done incalculable damage among our Community. The blacks we are retaining as labourers."

To Mr. Thinkwell, who regarded both Catholics and Protestants with impartial aloofness and surprise, all this made very good reading. It interested him to see these strange, hot, and bigoted creeds at their perpetual duel, even on this remote island.

Poor Miss Smith had to deplore, at this time, a good deal of immorality and laxity as to the marriage ceremony, which was punished with a severity worthy of a New England state. The Orphans, it seemed, had a shocking habit of taking the law into their own hands, and, when a marriage was forbidden them, merely doing without. Also there were, as in the wider world, a certain number of casually illicit encounters and illegitimate births.

"This island is a *Sink of Iniquity*," wrote Miss Smith, no doubt in a mood of exaggeration, on December 31st, 1899, when she held that a new century was

about to begin. "On Sunday I instructed David" (the Reverend Donald Maclean had died in the previous year, and Miss Smith had ordained his son), "in a very eloquent and severe sermon on the text, 'Sodom and Gomorrah, these wicked cities.' He delivered it well, and I hope the Orphans profited. He warned them most solemnly that, if their wickedness persisted (there have been *two* unlawful alliances this week) the Almighty in His Wrath might cause our Island to be overtaken with some fearful Fate, attacked by fierce savages, by plague, or overwhelmed by one of those monstrous waves that sometimes, during the monsoons, have swept up and ravaged our shores. Then, he said, would the innocent perish with the guilty, so that it behoved *all* of us to have a care for the Virtue of the rest, and to observe the *utmost stringency* in the laws on these matters. Nellie Perkins, who has lately had a baby she has no business with, was so overcome as to faint. I hope the Discourse may not fall to the ground."

Every now and then, throughout all this period, social and constitutional developments would be noted. There were, it seemed, recurrent complaints among the Orphans of the land laws, of conditions of labour, of inequalities, injustices, and oppressions. From time to time a riot broke out and had to be suppressed. In 1910 a regular revolutionary war raged; one of the Smith sons was killed by rebels, and there was much bloodshed before it was put down. Miss Smith's account of all this was a little incoherent and illegible—she was, after all, then eighty-five—and the death of her son William affected her very deeply with rage and grief. However, Mr. Thinkwell gathered that the rebels had been defeated, and that such as were not killed or sentenced to convict labour withdrew (com-

pulsorily or otherwise) with their families to Hibernia, the other and more barren spur of the island, where they had continued in a state of unrest even to the present day.

It was after this war that Miss Smith adopted, with increasing regularity as she got used to it, the royal "we." Also, her handwriting became noticeably worse.

"Re-named our house Balmoral," she wrote in 1911, "which is far more fitting to our Position."

A headier, testier, more arrogant and impatient tone began to mark the journal. Miss Smith seemed to be losing her respect for the constitution. . . .

"Have had a decree issued," she wrote, "that Our Name, when mentioned, shall be greeted with an obeisance. Also, that the National Anthem shall be sung when We appear at public functions. Royal etiquette must be preserved, if only for the general safety of the Constitution. Parliament has our Birthday Celebrations next week well in hand."

These celebrations had obviously been so thorough and satisfactory as to put it out of the question that Miss Smith should use the pen for several days afterwards. The entries became, in fact, yearly rarer and less intelligible. Age, liquor, and a wandering mind had the old lady by this time well in their grip. Occasionally there was one of the old characteristic autocratic outbursts, or pious reflections, but for the most part the scrawlings on the bark became at once fainter, wilder, and more obscure, till they almost ceased.

The last entry was dated June, 1920.

"David died. Ordained his son, Angus. Have ordered that the prayer for Rescue be dropped out of Divine Worship, as obviously this is *not* the Lord's

Will for us. Jean made a foolish scene about it; she gets tiresome, can talk of nothing but Aberdeen haddocks. Personally We feel We have been called to these great responsibilities, and do not now even *desire* to leave them. Ordained Angus Maclean."

Thus Miss Smith ceased, the fearful arrogance of her last brief statement made pathetic by that repetition which is due to wandering senility. Age had at last defeated her; her recording quill dropped from her unsteady hand.

Mr. Thinkwell re-tied the bundle of bark with the Martial, and fell to musing on the strange career of this old lady, called to so odd a fortune. On the history of the island, too, he mused, as revealed in these jottings. The world in microcosm! Interesting to note the factors which had caused in this tiny world its particular development; to compare them with those more universal factors which had kept it spinning, roughly, along the same lines as the societies of the larger world. An inexhaustible study, had one but the time to give to it. Ten days was all too little; however, Mr. Thinkwell proposed to spend those ten days as profitably as he could. He would get Denis Smith to show him round; he was a man of more mother-wit than his egregious brother, or, indeed, than any of the elder Smiths whom Mr. Thinkwell had yet met. So long as Denis Smith was sober, he should be able to make enlightening revelations and comments on the history of his own times. Decidedly, a man of wits.

3

Mr. Thinkwell was drowsing off in the pleasant afternoon when Mr. Denis Smith, in a kind of loose bath robe, returned to him and seated himself at his side.

"I am afraid," he said, "that I disturb your rest. Well, have you perused our literature, including the journal?"

"Indeed," said Mr. Thinkwell, rousing to animation, "I have perused the journal. The other books I only glanced at. But the journal—what a remarkable achievement! I must say I found it of absorbing interest."

"I suppose it would be," said Miss Smith's son, "to a stranger. . . . As to remarkable—well, y' know, my dear sir, mamma's a damned remarkable woman, and that's a fact. Always has been."

"I can well believe it," Mr. Thinkwell replied. "These apparently commonplace types, when moulded by such strange circumstances as were your mother's lot . . . who can say what the result will be? . . . By the way, do you know what was the great shock which Miss Smith would seem to have sustained in 1870, just before your father's death? A shock, one gathers, for which your father was responsible, for it embittered her a good deal against him, as you know."

"Oh, he was always shocking her. Yes, I believe something out of the ordinary happened about that time, but she's never told us what. I wouldn't wonder if papa kissed an orphan girl—or went further still, y' know. Papa was a gay dog—might have done anything. And mamma's always been easily shocked. A funny match that was, to be sure. Papa'd probably have suited himself better if he'd waited for the eldest orphan—but, of course, she'd have been a bit young for him, and there was mamma all ripe and ready."

"Well," said Mr. Thinkwell, changing the subject, for, though he liked Mr. Denis Smith, he thought that he was talking in rather a common way, "I am antici-

pating a very interesting stay here. You must show me and tell me a great deal, if you will be so kind."

"With all my heart. If only to spite old Bertie. . . . By the way, your little girl's been up to mischief on Bertie's land—climbing a palm tree and bringing down a baby monkey. One, she mustn't climb my brother's trees, or she'll get into trouble; two, she mustn't either climb trees or catch monkeys on Sunday. A nice little girl, and I don't want to see her in trouble."

"Rosamond is a troublesome child," said Mr. Thinkwell, displeased. "Absent-minded, I am afraid, and remarkable neither for intelligence nor common sense."

CHAPTER XV

SUNDAY EVENING

I

CHARLES, William, and Rosamond, defeated early in their walk in the matter of the young monkey, about which a keeper spoke to them very firmly (Sunday being here, as elsewhere, a keeper's most vigilant day), proceeded to climb a path that took them up the nearer of the two forested hills.

"They are cutting down the trees," said Charles. "In another twenty years there will be no forest left. And they are planting seedlings, as if that helped matters. The Smiths would. It strikes me that all the European vices and imbecilities thrive on Orphan Island. First a few of them steal the land from the many, then they spoil it. I hate these Smiths."

"A hawk-moth," said William, and stalked it.

Rosamond tipped a silver candle-nut leaf full of dew over her face and mouth. The pulling of the branch shook loose from the shining tree a flurry of green and scarlet birds; they dipped about her like a field of grass and poppies.

"Sugar cane," said Charles, breaking off a juicy green stem. "Probably it's a frightful crime to pick it. I wonder whose estate we are on now. Here, Rosamond."

Rosamond took a foot of the cane and sucked it. There was a stir of warm wind smelling of honey, and on it black butterflies drifted.

A green cocoa-nut tumbled at Rosamond's feet; it

burst open, smelling of sweet spices. A land crab sprang into it, saturating himself with delightful liquor.

They climbed over a spur of hill, and suddenly at their feet a rose bloomed in the forest. A tarn held the evening aflame within its breast. Water birds scuttled about its surface; water-plants more gently and sedately swayed.

Rosamond plunged down to its green shore, and soon was in it, flapping among the water-hens, floating in the glowing rose's heart. William meanwhile examined the insects that ran about its surface, and Charles stood on the brow of the hill, looking through his field glasses at the view. He swept them over such parts of the island as he could see, as if he looked for some one, whistling softly to himself.

Rosamond came out, green with weed, and rubbed her limbs with oily fluid from the palm trees, as she had observed Flora to do, until she shone like wax. She resumed the feather tunic, and then they went down into the deep wooded valley that cleft the island, and climbed the other hill.

They were submerged in brilliant colours, drowned in strong and exquisite scents, covered with the fragrant pollen of many flowers. They encountered scorpions, hornets, centipedes, land turtles, even wild pigs. People, too. Lovers strolling together, or lying in the woods, who looked at them as they passed with curious and friendly eyes. Huts dotted the woods, and outside them people sat; simple Orphan families, peasants, mostly, working on their lords' estates.

Then, as they topped the other hill, they saw Flora Smith and Nogood Peter Conolly standing below them, beneath a clump of pepper trees, earnestly talking.

"Damn," said Charles, who did not like to feel an intruder.

But Flora greeted them with her half mocking "Well, Thinkwells," and added, "You find us discussing our future lives. I am resolved mine is to be prodigiously merry and fashionable. Charles, Rosamond tells me you know all about London life."

"Not quite all, I'm glad to say." Charles, composed young man, blushed faintly when Flora spoke to him, passing it off with a smile.

"Oh, well, enough for me. You must tell me all about it. Come, leave these three and walk back with me through the woods. Meanwhile Nogood here can take Rosamond and William to see the convicts down below there in the cove." There was, surely, something of unkindness in Flora this evening towards her friend Peter, who took it, however, coolly enough.

"Do you want to see the convicts?" he asked Rosamond, who said, "No, thank you."

"Oh, well," said Flora, "take them somewhere else then. I'm sure I don't care where. Charles and I are going off together, that's all I mean. That is, Charles, if you haven't other things to do."

"Not a thing in the world. Let's walk, and I'll tell you London scandals."

They turned and climbed back over the brow of the hill together. Their laughter rang out.

Peter Conolly did not look after them. He said, "If you come down this path to the cove, you can walk back round the shore to the other side. It saves the climb over the hills, and is an agreeable walk."

Rosamond thought, "Flora and he have quarrelled. I should not like that, to quarrel with Flora."

They went down the winding path, past little houses, little plots of cultivated land, to the shore, which was indented here into a little bay.

"Convict Cove," said Conolly indifferently, and Rosamond remembered that his father was there.

In the distance they saw the convicts—a crowd of roped men sitting on the sand. Oh, dear, what had they done to be so unfortunate? Was any crime dreadful enough for captivity, for loss of freedom? Why not kill them at once, and have done? Easier for them, and less trouble for authority. To be tied hand and foot and man to man . . . only to be set loose to labour, and then to be tied again. . . . who, even in this world of miserable sinners, ever deserved that?

Rosamond blinked away tears as they skirted Convict Cove and came down on the shore beyond it.

A good deal of quiet bathing in the lagoon was going on, and at the sea's edge fishermen were setting turtle-traps; probably no Sunday occupation.

Nogood Conolly talked gaily; he asked them questions about England. But Charles should have been there, for his questions were mostly of pictures, and of pictures William and Rosamond knew little. Did people draw and paint pictures much, in England, of what they saw? How did they make their colours? What colours did they use? On the island there were only a few colours, and a few more that could be obtained by mixing. At school they had learnt about the great artists of the world, but perhaps now there were many more? For all William and Rosamond knew, there might be thousands more; artists might have arrived every year in great shoals and schools, like porpoises, ever since the eighteen-fifties. Rosamond said she expected there were lots. As to William, he was busy searching the wet sand for creatures, so said nothing. Certainly Charles was needed. But, since Flora, too, had needed Charles, Mr. Nogood Conolly had to make the best of these younger and

less cultured Thinkwells. He intended, he said, when he got to England, to learn to draw and paint properly.

"Are you good at it?" asked Rosamond, and he said, well, he thought he was, rather. Anyhow, it was what he liked doing best, and he meant to do it, whatever any one said.

"Don't they like your doing it?"

"Oh Lord, here I have to be a dentist. You see, my father was a dentist, before he was a rebel and a convict, and I was trained for it. But I hate it."

"How do you pull teeth out?" asked William. "You haven't any pincers, have you?"

"Yes: wooden ones. But I usually break them—the teeth, I mean."

"Have you any stuff you use to numb them with?"

"Yes, a juice we get from a shrub. But I hate the whole business. Why should I pull out people's disgusting teeth, when I want to be painting pictures?"

"Well," said William judicially, "there must be people to see to teeth, and there needn't really be pictures, I suppose. So dentists are more important than artists. All the same, I'm all for every one doing what they want. I should be jolly sick if any one stopped me bug-hunting."

"Pray," said Nogood, "are painters regarded as *Smith* in England?"

"Smith?"

"Upper class, that means," Rosamond explained to William.

"Upper *what*? Good Lord, I don't know. Never noticed. I expect so. Are they, Rosamond?"

Rosamond searched her memory for the artists of Cambridge. . . .

"Oh, yes, I think so."

"I don't think," said William, reflecting on such

alien matters for the first time, "that all that stuff people talk in England about class depends on what people do. It seems to be more what they are—what their people are, and what schools they went to, and all that. So far as I can make out, at least. But what do you want to bother about that kind of rot for?" He was a little contemptuous of a man who could ask such a question as that.

"I don't," said Nogood Peter. "But Flora does. She wants to lead a life of fashion. She desires me to do no work at all, once we get to England; or else to try to get into the Government or something. You see, here it isn't Smith to work at anything except government. But I hoped that perhaps in England painting might be counted Smith."

"Funny point of view," said William, renouncing interest in the subject and going after a crab who was wearing a whelk's shell on his tail. Obviously Flora must be an ass.

"Oh, yes, I'm sure painting is quite Smith," Rosamond said. "Unless it's done on pavements."

"That makes a difference? Why?"

"I don't know, but it does. Perhaps it shows that you can't afford paper or canvas. Anyhow, pavement artists aren't generally gentlemen. They're very clever, though. I'd rather be one. But then I don't mind about being Smith."

"Lord knows I don't. But Flora. . . ."

Rosamond nodded sympathetically.

"I know. *I* want to be Smith—to seem Smith, I mean—when I'm with Flora."

She was, in spite of his marvellous, his golden fortune in being loved by Flora, almost a little sorry for Nogood, who would have so much to live up to, such a continuous strain all his life.

"What," asked the young man, rather moodily, "does your brother Charles do? Anything?"

"He writes things. Poetry, and stories, and articles in papers, and reviews of books."

"Oh. Is that a Smith trade?"

"N-no, not very," said Rosamond kindly, and shied a pebble at a high cocoa-nut, getting it full in the middle, so that it leaped to the ground and rolled on to the sand.

"Is he good at it?" Nogood looked a little brighter, she was pleased to see.

"Oh, I don't know. . . . Much like other people, I suppose. . . . I expect it's a thing any one can do, you know, if they try. Anyhow, a great many people seem to. . . . As a matter of fact, I don't actually read what Charles writes."

"Lord, I should think not!" said William, overhearing, and went off again after a creature.

Suddenly, quite suddenly, as they walked at the sea's edge, the rose-gold day dipped down, the silver and purple night swung up. Fireflies, sparkling like the souls of the righteous, ran to and fro about the forest gloom and twinkled over the dark and shining lagoon, whose ripples ran gold beneath the climbing moon. The scented tides of the night flowed sweetly down their throats; its little drowsy calls began, its gentle winds caressed their throats and cheeks.

Nogood Conolly left the Thinkwells at the isthmus that led to Hibernia.

"You know the way from here. Good-night."

2

They met Mr. Thinkwell; he was examining the stars. He told them that they had all been asked to supper by Mrs. Smith-Carter, and that they were late.

Supper at Mrs. Smith-Carter's was a loud, jolly meal. Mr. Carter had rather Orphan manners, and was full of cheerful, ill-bred chaff. There were two married daughters and their husbands, Mr. Lane and Dr. Field, to supper, and the Smith-Carter son, George. Flora had also been invited, but she and Charles did not come in until supper was nearly finished.

The Smith-Carter sons-in-law desired information about England. Pigs, for instance. Mr. Lane wanted to know about pigs. Cambridge pigs: how were they for flesh? None of the Thinkwells knew. Mr. Thinkwell was inclined to think Cambridge not a pig centre. Pigs flourished more elsewhere. English pigs were better, he believed, than pigs on the Continent. Stouter. Mr. Lane told about island pigs, which he was interested in breeding.

"But what *I* can't understand," said Mrs. Smith-Carter, "is how you get on without turtle and tortoise meat. Mamma says you have neither, only turtle soup now and then."

Mr. Thinkwell said that they ate instead a great deal of mutton and beef, which meant dead sheep and cow.

"Oh, I know, of course. As the children learn at school—'Of what use is the cow? To give us milk to drink and beef to eat. Of what use is the sheep? Its wool makes clothes for us to wear, and its flesh makes mutton for us to eat.' Mamma brought us all up on a long catechism of English habits, most of which meant nothing to us at all, because we didn't know what kind of creatures sheep and cows and the rest might be—and mamma never could draw anything. 'Why did God create the dog? To be the friend of man. The horse? To draw burdens for man and carry him about. The horse is a noble animal.' "

"But when," said one of the sons-in-law, "we asked to be told of some of the noble deeds of the horse, our teachers knew of none, and a deputation to Miss Smith failed to discover any. For it seems that the horse don't carry man about and draw his burdens out of kindness, but because he has to. So *that's* not noble. Perhaps you can tell us, sir, something about the noble conduct of the horse."

"I can only suppose," Mr. Thinkwell replied, "that some persons think it noble of the horse not to trample and kick them to death whenever it gets the chance. For my part, I should call it only stupid. For the larger and stronger creature to allow himself to be captured and kept in disagreeable bondage by the smaller and weaker is merely an evidence of inferior intelligence. No; I never observed any nobility of act or thought on the part of a horse, though I don't pretend, of course, to see into their minds."

"So much for the horse," said Mr. Lane. "To tell ye the truth, I always suspected it. None of the animals *here* are noble—pigs, turtles, lizards, fish, birds, monkeys, and the rest—not one of 'em—at least *I* never noticed it in them, did you, Jack? So why should the horse be so peculiar? And there you are; he ain't; it was a tale put up by Miss Smith. As to old Jean, all she'd ever say was that all God's creatures were verra weel in their ain places, but that none of 'em, not even man, had cause to be set up. If any creature is noble, I fancy Jean thinks it's the Scottish haddock. . . . If you're interested in animals, Mr. Thinkwell, I must show you over my little farm to-morrow. I have the largest tortoise stud on the island. We race 'em, you know. Betting on races is forbidden by law, because Miss Smith says it's sinful, but there's a good bit of it goes on just the same."

"Really, Sam," his wife said, "you don't need to tell Mr. Thinkwell *that*. Whatever will he think of us? Besides, I'm sure he has far too many things to see here to want to look at the animals on your farm."

"Very true, Lizzie," said her papa. "Mr. Thinkwell must come and see parliament at work to-morrow, and get an idea of the way we do things here. What say you, Mr. Thinkwell?"

"I should certainly wish to do that."

"I'll come and see your animals, Mr. Lane, may I?" said William.

"We've a debate to-morrow on the Fermented Liquors Bill," said Mr. Carter. "And on the Bastardy Bill. And probably the Noxious Herbs Bill too. Besides all the usual business. Our parliament, you know, is closely modelled on yours, only we've only one House."

"How many members have you?"

"Twenty-nine. And a cabinet of six. My brother-in-law Albert Edward is Prime Minister, you know. Always is. He's a great man at working the elections."

"What is your suffrage qualification?"

"Eh?"

"Who votes?"

"Men who own or rent a certain amount of land."

"Not exactly democratic."

"Democratic. . . ."

"I mean, your constitution seems to rest on a narrow basis. The unpropertied classes don't have much say in it."

"No; that's the notion; that's as it should be."

"I suppose that is one cause of the risings that occur from time to time."

"Oh, well, that's more the land laws, and so on. But

we put 'em down. You do the same in Great Britain, I suppose."

"Certainly, when they occur. But our suffrage is more extended than yours, so there is less grievance on the whole, as to the laws. . . . Not that I personally regard a vote as a privilege, or as a particularly useful instrument in helping to govern a country, for we can only vote for the candidates who present themselves, and these are, as a rule, singularly inefficient persons. All the same, however, foolish as they may be, they count as votes in a division, and the House may possibly occasionally divide on a question of importance. But the whole business is a very foolish performance, and a very poor and dilatory way of getting things done. I have no doubt that yours is the same."

"And so much," said Mr. Lane, "for the nobility, wisdom, and justice of the British constitution. It's like the noble horse—a put-up tale. Your grandmamma, my dear Lizzie, is an old lady of prodigious imagination, as I've often suspected."

"Now, Sam," said his mother-in-law, "no impertinence about mamma. You know I don't allow it in this house."

At this point Flora appeared, with Charles, remarking that darkness had overtaken them on the hill. She was in high spirits; as to Charles, he appeared as if he were under a spell. He ate little, but drank and laughed a good deal, and, throughout the evening, his eyes scarcely left Flora's face. Enchantment held Charles; not for the first time, nor for the last, he was passionately and profoundly fallen into love. Flora, golden-brown in Rosamond's white frock, her dark eyes glinting through their long lashes like starlit pools through reeds, her dimples playing in and out, flung at him her careless, mocking charm, teased him with her

impudent wit, smiled into his eyes, and smiled away; then turned the battery of her idle nonsense on the other gentlemen—on Mr. Thinkwell, who thought her a handsome and charming girl who talked too much; on William, who wished she wouldn't chatter to him, for he preferred girls of few words, and had, besides, already decided that Flora must be an ass; on George, already her helpless, stolid slave; on the husbands of her cousins, who were used to her and ate their supper. Even on Rosamond Flora smiled, collecting in passing the devotion from that childish gray stare. It pleased Flora to-night to be in good humour and to please her company.

"You're very smart and proud, missie," her uncle told her, "in your white gown. I suppose you made Miss Rosamond give you that."

"We exchanged, uncle. Rosamond prefers the feathers, don't you, Rosamond? I declare it suits you famously. Doesn't she look well in feathers? Like a little scarlet pigeon with a yellow head. Doesn't she, Charles?"

"Not so well as you did. You looked like a bird of paradise in it."

"Well, and what do I look like now?"

"Oh, some kind of wood goddess."

Charles spoke carelessly, pretending not to care, pretending to be casual and off-hand, while his laughing eyes shone like the lit candle-nuts on the table.

"A wood-goddess! Oh, la la! I'd rather be a lady of fashion, driving through London town. You don't say the right things to me, Charles."

"Ladies of fashion driving through London don't wear white cotton tennis frocks. Something much more elaborate. You'd have to wear stockings, too. You wouldn't be nearly so nice as you are now."

"Wait and see. . . . As to you, you'd be wearing a tall black hat and a coat with tails; I've read about that in *Mixing in Society*."

"You're a few years out of date on this island, let me tell you. You'll get a lot of surprises in England."

"The more the better. I enjoy surprises. . . . And what I shall really enjoy is seeing grandmamma get them. We shall all love that, shan't we, Sam?"

"Now, Flora," her aunt broke in, "you know very well I don't let you be impertinent to your grandmamma here. I've just had to say the same to Sam. You'll shock the Mr. Thinkwells, rattling on like this. Now fetch your flute, George, and the girls shall sing some quiet Sunday songs and hymns."

Here was Flora's eclipse, for Lizzie, the stouter of the young matrons, had a voice of that sweet, exquisite, and powerful quality which is only to be found in the stout, and soared high above Flora's thin contralto, as George piped for them "Nearer my God to Thee," "Sun of my soul," and other tunes suitable for Sunday evening. Rosamond, who liked evening hymns, joined, in her small, deep voice, though, having little ear, she did not join in tune. The Thinkwell gentlemen, not caring for either words or the tunes, sat in silence, a good deal bored. In fact, half-way through William went out. Mr. Thinkwell sighed, unconsciously, much oftener than he knew. But Charles, oblivious, sat in his dark corner and stared at Flora, who had so transfixed his heart.

At the end of a hymn Mr. Thinkwell rose hastily and said that he must go. The party broke up. George was detailed to accompany Flora home to the Yams. The Thinkwells walked to the little house at the edge of the wood which had been placed at their disposal by Mr. Denis Smith, on whose land it was, and who had

turned out the present occupants to make room for them. It was a nice little house, with four rooms, and the Thinkwells, very happy to have it and no longer to be staying with people as visitors—a position which Mr. Thinkwell, in particular, always found rather disagreeable—had already placed in it their possessions. But only Mr. Thinkwell intended to sleep in it; his sons and daughter preferred the woods.

Rosamond dragged her mattress under a spreading bread-fruit tree, from whence she looked out on the moony sea; and quite close to her was a cow-tree, so that when she woke in the morning she could pluck a bread-fruit and put her mouth to the cow-tree, for she did not yet know that this was strictly forbidden, and that both trees belonged to Mr. Denis Smith, who sold the milk to the milkman and the fruit to the bread-fruit vendor. Rosamond did not yet understand about property, even in England.

Charles lay long awake, staring up at the starry sky, listening to the island noises and the crooning sea, drinking in a hundred sweet odours, smiling to see before him in the night Flora's wild loveliness, Flora's mocking, tilting smile. The things he had said to Flora on that walk he said again over to himself . . . the things that had pleased her, that had made her laugh. . . . A witty, elegant young man from London, a poet, a gentleman of taste. . . . Surely . . . surely . . .

CHAPTER XVI

SMITH METHODS WITH SOME DULL THINGS

I

NEXT morning the Thinkwells enjoyed the great pleasure of breakfasting alone in their own house, off food and milk left them by the regular vendors of these. They were all very happy to be no longer visitors, and to be free to do precisely as they pleased. Mr. Thinkwell had had, before breakfast, a bath in one of the hot geyser springs shown him by Mr. Denis Smith, which were kept strictly enclosed from the public, and had found it very agreeable and beneficial to his health. The others had swum in the lagoon, where they had again met Nogood Conolly and Heathcliff Smith, but not this time Flora, who had perhaps slept late.

Mr. Denis Smith had even engaged a young woman to serve them, prepare their meals, and so forth. She was a handsome girl called Hate-Lies Jones, the granddaughter of an Orphan whose father had been a Welsh milkman in east London and who had himself gone into the island milk trade and had passed it down to his son, the father of Hate-Lies. Hate-Lies, who always complained that, what with one thing and what with another, she was the most unlucky girl in the world, thus had the misfortune of taking in the morning milk, whether from cow-tree or cocoa-nut, from her own father or brother, which every one must perceive is very dull. However, she endeavoured to make up for this with the bread-fruit man, the yam man, and

the tortoise-meat man. But poor Hate-Lies was rather gloomy, for she had a great ambition to be married, and, though she was now turned twenty-eight, she was not yet engaged. She now declared herself sick of the Orphan young men, and hoped to meet some more likely husbands in Great Britain.

"I expect you heard the drowning this morning," she remarked to Rosamond, as she cleared away the breakfast things.

"The drowning? No."

"Well, that woman that poisoned her husband was drowned. Taken in a boat out to sea from Convict Cove and drowned. Six o'clock, it was fixed for. Half the island was down on the shore watching. Ought to be a lesson."

Rosamond felt as she sometimes did in church before breakfast on a hot day—hot and cold and blind. Drowned on purpose! Choked to death in sea-water. . . . Yet was it worse than hangings in England . . . or prison everywhere . . . or animals in cages? . . .

She went out of the house and sat in the wood, staring into green trees, her back to the cruel sea, and thought of humming birds, of Flora, of baby tortoises.

It was an exquisite morning of pearl and emerald, turquoise and gold. The Thinkwells lay and smoked outside Belle Vue, reposing after their pre-breakfast exertions and contemplating with pleasure the agreeable day before them. Rosamond forgot the poor drowned murderess; she was drowned again, poor, woman, in the enchanted oblivion of the island, a land of sweet mandragora in which no grief could live.

Mr. Thinkwell said he would go and look at the schools this morning, and in the afternoon visit the House of Parliament. Charles said one could do that kind of thing in England, and he wasn't going to waste

his time over it here. For his part, he would stroll about the island and enjoy himself; he had a desire to visit the shops. William said he thought of calling on Mr. Lane this morning and seeing his animals. Rosamond had an ambition to cruise about the lagoon in a log canoe, landing on the reef. Also, she wanted to explore more of the island. She hoped that she might also enjoy for a time the company of Flora; and, for that matter, Charles too hoped for this.

2

So the Thinkwells went about their several businesses. Mr. Denis Smith strolled over to Belle Vue to fetch Mr. Thinkwell to see the schools.

"Which shall I show you first? The Smith school or the Orphan?"

"You have two, then?"

"Oh, dear, yes. 'Pon my soul, I should say so. High class and low class; gentry and riff-raff. Why, don't tell me you educate your different classes all mixed up at the same schools!"

"No. There is such a difference in cost between our various types of school that it means, practically, a class difference. We have our free schools, our cheap schools, and our expensive schools. It is merely a question of cost with us. Any one who can afford it is free to send his children to the most expensive schools."

"Well, we are very strict about ours. Only Smiths by birth—and not quite all of them—are admitted into our better schools. Never do to mix 'em up; it'd do away with class distinctions in no time."

"Dear me! How you do value class here, to be sure!"

Mr. Denis Smith winked. "I should say so!

Mamma's pet idea. She says the Creator appointed us gentry, trades people, and poor. The great thing is to keep the lower classes in their place. They get a bit uppish if one isn't careful; begin fancying themselves Smith, y' know, and all that. Wanting power, and land, and higher wages, and what not. Don't *your* upper classes feel like that about the poor?"

Mr. Thinkwell took off his glasses and rubbed them thoughtfully. "I suppose," he said, "that a certain number do. Naturally, each class likes to keep such advantages as it has. But, as to power—political power, that is—it is always in the hands of a few, who are more often rich than poor, even when the poor have most of the votes. Money generally beats the vote in the race for power."

"That's sound! Legislation ain't dangerous, then, even in the hands of the poor?"

"All legislation," said Mr. Thinkwell, "is dangerous. Dangerous, I mean, to the public welfare. As to the vote, it is a form for putting one of our slightly ridiculous political parties rather than another in power (voters are perennially hopeful), but in point of fact no party in our country is very different from any other. None are intelligent, and all do considerably more harm than good. Most politicians are rather stupid and selfish people, who care for little beyond their own advantage, and seem very soon dazzled with the pleasures of power." Mr. Thinkwell, academic and cultured, despised politicians to perhaps an unjust extent.

"They sound amazingly like ourselves. Well now, here is our Orphan school."

3

The Orphan school sat in groups or classes, with about twenty in each, on the sea shore, and before each

class stood a male or female teacher, obviously also Orphan in class, imparting instruction. The school rose to its feet as Mr. Smith approached, but he motioned it to be seated.

They stopped near a group consisting of children of about ten years old, who were chanting in chorus, while their teacher beat time with a cane:—

"Julius invades at half B.C.,
Claudius conquers at half A.D.,
The Saxons come at half-past four,
At six converted they adore,
The Danish pirates land at eight,
At nine great Alfred yields to fate,
Half-past ten comes, yet Normans tarry,
Eleven brings the first king Harry. . . ."

"History," Mr. Smith explained. "All in verse, y' see. Easier to learn, eh?"

"Fifteen four seven, five three and five eight,
Sixth Edward, Mary, Elizabeth date,"

the children chanted.

"I note," said Mr. Thinkwell, "that your educational system suffers, as ours does, from a strange obsession as to the importance of the dates at which kings and queens reigned."

"Oh, yes. Mamma always swore by the dates of the kings and queens. She taught us all that poem. Said it was composed by some clergyman her papa knew. We had to learn long lists of dates too, of course. Now here's a Scripture lesson."

They moved on to another group, of whom a buxom young woman was inquiring, "What did God make on

the first day?" She took them briskly through creation week, ending with, "And how did the Lord spend Saturday?"

"Resting," said the class in chorus.

"And which day does He tell *us* to rest?"

"Sunday."

"Why not Saturday?"

"To show we aren't Jews."

After a few further inquiries derogatory to Jews, who were obviously not well thought of on the island, the teacher conducted her pupils to the Reformation, eliciting from them the unanimous view that this was a great and glorious event.

"Are there still Roman Catholics in the world?" she then inquired, and, on receiving an affirmative reply, "What do Roman Catholics worship instead of God?"

"The Virgin Mary and a piece of bread," the Orphans told her, with some zest.

"How do they pray?"

"With vain repetitions in an unknown tongue and a string of beads."

"And how does God punish Roman Catholics for their idolatry?"

"He has them killed, and eaten up by black men, who are the blind and ignorant instruments of His will."

"What do we learn from this?"

"Not to be Roman Catholics!" The Orphans were quite sure as to that.

The next class was learning arithmetic, the sand being used as blackboard, and to the one beyond was being imparted such geography as Miss Smith had acquired in her youth, developed and perverted through three generations of transmission. The world, as

viewed from Orphan Island, wore a curious, Brito-centric aspect. Furthermore, each country seemed to revolve round one large town, or capital, and to spend its entire time exporting and importing commodities to and fro between itself and Great Britain. One would have gathered that no other occupation was carried on. It was obvious that Miss Smith had been brought up on sound Free Trade principles, and had faithfully passed down the torch.

The French class then attracted Mr. Thinkwell's attention; having paused near it long enough to learn that, whatever the quality of Miss Smith's own French, it had become, as transmitted through seventy years, an almost unrecognizable jargon, he moved on to a group which seemed to be learning natural history by the catechising method quoted by Mr. Lane at supper last night, illustrated by drawings on the sand by Orphans of the animal under discussion. Mr. Thinkwell acquired as he listened some information as to the habits of various island creatures, and, more particularly, as to their various uses to the islanders, for natural history was taught here in the old-fashioned, homo-centric manner. Kindness to animals was, however, urged, and unnecessary cruelty strongly condemned; though, as the teacher pointed out, it was often necessary to deprive an animal of its life, in fact, it might often be the kindest treatment, since, as animals were not, like man, religious beings, their sufferings ended with their death. Furthermore, if we leave them to die of natural causes, we cannot eat them. The many lessons that should be learnt from animals were touched on, with particular reference to ants and bees, who were so very busy, intelligent and industrious as to put man to shame. The teacher, apropos of this, repeated to his class a poem about Matilda, who

was set up in that she had made a purse of beads for her aunt, and was bidden to observe the bees, how they made hives full of honey and other ingenious contrivances far beyond her powers.

"All the same," Mr. Thinkwell said, remembering vaguely a retort of Matilda's that he had seen somewhere appended to this tale, and absent-mindedly, as was a habit of his, quoting it aloud, "all the same,—

> Whate'er their skill and busy deeds,
> They cannot make a purse of beads."

He spoke more loudly than he knew, and the teacher and class turned to look at him.

"*They cannot make a purse of beads,*" Mr. Thinkwell repeated, with some emphasis, and laughed, and the children laughed too, at being interrupted, and at the strange gentleman in his queer clothes.

Their teacher, an amiable young man, said "Ha, ha! Very true, sir. Very true indeed."

"So, you see," said Mr. Thinkwell, "Matilda had the laugh of the bees after all. Or did she? I'm not so sure! The bees might ask, why should any one *wish* to make a purse of beads? Beads! What an idea! However, anyhow Matilda could do it if she wanted to, and the bees couldn't. On the other hand, they could make honey, and *she* couldn't. Well, perhaps after all the bees had the best of it."

The Orphan children laughed more, with joy at the interruption and mirth at the droll gentleman dressed all in white with glass eyes who was come to take them all away on a ship.

"Dear me," said Mr. Thinkwell, "I am afraid I am disturbing your class, sir. I should not have interrupted."

"Indeed, sir, I pray you!"

Mr. Denis Smith, who had strolled away during the Scripture lesson, here came back and said that Mr. Thinkwell might perhaps be interested in the physiology lesson which was proceeding a little way off.

"They have lately introduced new methods of teaching this subject," he said. "Some eager busy-bodies got up a fuss about children being kept in ignorance of physical matters—birth, don't you know, and what not. The modern view is that ignorance of such important things warps their little minds and lives. Of course mamma wouldn't agree. *She* always told us, when we asked questions, not to be inquisitive, and that we should know all that was necessary *when* it was necessary. And, sure enough, so we did. Most parents in our day brought up their children to believe that babies grow on cocoa-nut trees. You see, we're used to the idea that we get nearly everything we want from cocoa-nut trees—food, drink, cups, cord, cloth, oil, butter, soap, wax, resin, gum, thatch, baskets, screens, mats, and so forth—so why not babies? Anyhow that's always been the legend here. Don't know if it warped our young minds. It didn't hurt mine, so far as I recollect, but then I didn't believe it. Never met a boy who did, what's more. Fact is, Mr. Thinkwell, children ain't such fools as people think. Now, if I may ask, pray what did you tell *your* children about such matters?"

"Nothing, that I remember. I have no recollection that the subject was ever broached. They may, of course, have raised it to their mother. . . ."

"Well, supposing they had asked you?"

"Naturally, I should have told them the facts. Why not? It would never have occurred to me to conceal them, any more than any other facts. They are of

no great interest, and of no immediate importance to children, of course, but neither can there be any reason for concealing them. I am afraid I have never understood either the impulse to make a mystery of them or the enthusiasm for imparting them. Both seem to me to be unbalanced."

"You, too, then, have both movements in your country?"

"I believe we have. But such matters do not come my way very much."

"Well, here is the physiology class. Unknown, I needn't say, to my mother, the teachers of the new type have got their way, and a little careful information is now imparted, very delicately, to the higher classes."

They stopped by the physiology class and listened. A little careful—very careful—information was certainly being imparted; human physiology, via plants, birds, and animals. Mr. Thinkwell several times caught the words "Very holy. Very beautiful. A very wonderful arrangement of God's."

"Dear me!" he said. "Dear me! What a curious notion! What is the idea in telling them that? Why not let them know at once, what they will have eventually to know, that it is one of the very worst, silliest, most inefficient, and most infernally inconvenient and dangerous arrangements in all nature?"

"My dear fellow," said Mr. Smith, "that's not the way we talk here. It would be regarded as blasphemy to the divine Contriver who arranged all things."

"Well, but one hears this 'holy and beautiful' talk even among those who don't acknowledge a divine Contriver. I must say I can't understand it. They must all be celibates. They should ask a few mothers their frank opinion of feeling ill for months and then producing in great agony a creature not only

grotesquely unattractive but so helpless and incompetent as to require attention from morning till night for years to keep it alive. It is a positive disgrace to science that no better system has yet been devised. I fear these teachers of yours, like many of ours, are sentimentalists. If it is that they are afraid of scaring the children off the whole business, they needn't be; nature will see to that."

"I dare say you are very right," said Mr. Smith. "Only once you begin telling children the worst about life, where are you to stop? I mean, you know, why darken their poor little lives at the dawn, so to speak? I mean, 'pon my soul, there's all kinds of trouble coming to them, poor little devils, pretty soon, and there's something to be said for giving 'em a rosy view of life to start with. But I dare say I am quite wrong. . . . Mind you, I don't uphold the cocoa-nut tree theory. But I can't say I see much harm in letting 'em think the whole business is going to be rather jolly."

"It is better," said Mr. Thinkwell, "in matters of science, to tell people dry facts; plain facts, without either embellishment or depreciation, and then they can judge for themselves. All these *adjectives* people use are a mistake."

"A dry fellow," thought Mr. Denis Smith, as they walked away together. "A very queer, dry, fellow. Learned, of course, and it's made him a trifle inhuman. He should drink more. Likeable, though; no humbug about him."

Aloud he said, "Well, that's the Orphan school. Now for the other. It's just round the next cove."

The Smith school was smaller in numbers than the Orphan, and looked more select. The children were plumper and handsomer, and less coarsely clad. They sat on benches, instead of on the ground. Their teach-

ers must also have had some Smith blood for their accents were more high-class and their deportment had more gentility. The Smith children spoke with more agreeable voices and more refined pronunciation than the Orphans; some of them were a good deal older, for, whereas the eldest Orphan pupils seemed not above thirteen, the Smiths ranged up to sixteen or so. Mr. Thinkwell commented on this, and Mr. Smith replied, "The others have to go to work early and help their parents. These don't."

Class in the making. Mr. Thinkwell was interested.

As to the substance of the teaching, it seemed much the same; except that the higher classes in the Smith school had got further in mathematics. Probably, Mr. Thinkwell reflected, that was about the only subject in which advance could be made by individual intelligence, on the stock of knowledge originally brought to the island.

Presently play-time was announced, and the boys of the school repaired to a smooth piece of turf at the edge of the wood and began to play a kind of cricket, using polished cocoa-nuts for balls.

"Curious," Mr. Thinkwell commented, and Mr. Albert Edward Smith, who had just joined them, said, "What is curious?"

"Why, that cricket should have found its way here. Miss Smith, I suppose—and your father, no doubt. . . ."

"Miss Smith," said Albert Edward, with that touch of distance which the mention of his father always evoked, "taught us all cricket from the first. She told us it was the national English game, and that not to play it would be un-English. So we have always played it."

"Quite so. But in point of fact, you know, it is a *tedious* game. A *slow* game. Don't you find it so?"

"I must confess," said Albert Edward, with his faint laugh, "that I am English enough to enjoy it. . . . Do you remember, Denis, that time I hit you to leg in 1881 and made six? And that famous catch of poor William's?"

"No," said Denis, rather rudely. "Can't say I do. Of course, if one plays cricket—and I agree with you, Mr. Thinkwell, that it's a tedious game—there must be hits and runs and catches. I don't keep 'em all in my mind for forty years."

Mr. Thinkwell noted that the brothers did not always get on very harmoniously together.

"Football is a much better game," he remarked. "Rugby. Do you play that here?"

"The boys kick balls about, of course. But with no very definite rules. It was always cricket we were taught to play. What a training for an English gentleman! We have a phrase, 'It's not cricket,' which we apply to anything underhand or unfair."

"Have you indeed?" said Mr. Thinkwell disagreeably. He was reflecting that most of England's worst phrases seemed to have taken root in this island. Miss Smith had doubtless been a most pernicious carrier. Her papa would, almost certainly, have used that dreadful cricket phrase, and she would have admired it very much and have passed it on to her young charges.

"What about the girls?" he said. "Don't they play?"

"Hardly cricket." Albert Edward gave a superior, Victorian smile at the thought. "That would scarcely be ladylike, would it? Not the older girls, anyhow. They have their games, of course. . . ."

"Oh! They play cricket at girls' schools with us. They are as keen as boys, I believe."

"My mother," said Albert Edward rather coldly, "would be amazed to hear it. . . . There is croquet, of course—hitting balls through hoops. Young ladies here play that."

"Croquet! A more tedious game than cricket even. Nearly as bad as golf. In my opinion, the only good games with balls are of an active nature—football, hockey, or some form of tennis."

"I am afraid," said Albert Edward, "that you will think it dreadfully English of me, but I still must champion cricket as the king of games."

He looked, indeed, such a king of men, as he stood benignly smiling, topping Mr. Thinkwell and his brother Denis by a head, his sweeping chestnut whiskers shining like floss silk in the sun, that Mr. Thinkwell could not withhold his admiration. These Smiths! What a family, when all was said! Whether Mr. Smith thought of it first, or Mr. Thinkwell, it somehow came into the common consciousness that Mr. Thinkwell, whatever his present station and learning, was only two generations removed from that scoundrelly sailor, a rough fellow of no class at all, who had deserted and marooned Mr. Smith's mamma. *He* would not have cared for cricket, that scoundrel sailor; it had not been cricket, what he had done—marooning a lady and forty orphans. No, that had not been cricket; and it was not to be expected that his grandson, Mr. Thinkwell of Cambridge, should be a supporter of the king of games.

4

For a little longer the gentlemen stood and watched the school at play—the boys at cricket and the girls

at their less organized and more childish scrambling about, chasing each other, playing at battles, climbing trees, and wading knee-deep in the sea after crabs. Then Mr. Albert Edward, glancing at the sundial near him, said, "Twelve o'clock. It is time that I went to the House. Do you care to accompany me, Mr. Thinkwell?"

Mr. Thinkwell said that he would like to very much.

"Having seen the flower of our nation in the bud," Denis said to him, "you shall now see it full-blown, at work on its own constitution. I hope you'll be impressed. For my part, I think we all talk a prodigious deal of nonsense in that parliament of ours."

"You mustn't mind my brother; he is something of a cynic," Albert Edward said.

Mr. Thinkwell said that he was quite used to parliaments, having often been to Westminster, and knew pretty well what to expect.

Walking inland, they were soon arrived at a clearing of the woods where a long wooden shed stood, with "House of Parliament" carved over its door. Through this door the Mr. Smiths conducted Mr. Thinkwell, and handed him over to that Mr. Lane whom he had met last night at supper. Mr. Lane took him to a bench at one side of the shed, from whence he obtained an excellent view of the assembly who filled it. These were mostly gentlemen of a more or less Smith air, though in varying degrees. Particularly was this Smith appearance noticeable in those who, Mr. Thinkwell supposed, formed the cabinet—a group of five or six members sitting together in a prominent position near the Speaker's chair. The Speaker was a gentleman with a strong look of Albert Edward Smith, and Mr. Thinkwell concluded that he was another brother.

It was certainly kept well in the family, this government business.

Miss Smith had obviously been not unfamiliar with the constitution of her country; she had taught the island parliament that it was proper to begin with a few questions.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Albert Edward Smith) was asked whether he was aware that a party of visitors had landed on Orphan Island the day before yesterday, and whether arrangements were being made for the transportation of any of the community to another country.

The Prime Minister replied that he was aware of the fact mentioned, and that Miss Smith's Government had the whole matter under consideration. A statement would be issued later, when arrangements were completed.

The Minister of the Interior was asked if he was aware that there had been a great deal of trespassing of late on private lands, and a good deal of robbery of the fruit and nut trees, and whether measures were being contemplated to safeguard land and property.

At this question Mr. Lane, who sat with Mr. Thinkwell, nodded agreement.

"Getting perfectly monstrous," he said. "Scandalous. They've no regard whatever for private property, these people. Trample over any one's land as soon as look at it."

The Minister of the Interior said that measures were in hand for the more vigorous prosecution and punishment of trespassers. Mr. Lane said, "Hear, hear."

Mr. Thinkwell asked him what claim the so-called owners of land had to it, over the other inhabitants of the island. Mr. Lane looked at him in surprise.

"Claim? How d'ye mean claim, sir? It's a question of ownership. The land *belongs* to certain people—always has."

"You mean, for the last fifty years or so, I suppose. But I must say I don't quite see in what this alleged ownership consists. I should have thought that the land on which people live should be common property, or else more or less equally divided. Just as much as the air they breathe."

"Gad, sir, you surprise me; indeed you do. Haven't you private ownership of land in England? We were always brought up to suppose so."

"Oh, yes. Certainly. And the same remarks apply there. But I should have thought, I must say, that on an island with so short a history as yours the land annexation system would scarcely have had time to become so developed. I am very much interested—and, if I may say so, rather shocked—to find that it is so. But let us listen. What is going on now?

"The Bastardy laws are being tightened up and made more severe. People have been getting round 'em lately. We don't let bastards own or rent any land, you know, nor go in for trade. By this new Bill they will all have to earn their living as hired workers. So will their parents."

"Really! Why so?"

"Oh, just to teach 'em not to be bastards. And not to have bastards, neither. Must have social laws kept, of course. Else, where *should* we all be? Not that I approve of all this interference with marriage by the Government. The Old Lady's much too apt to put her finger in the pie and forbid the parson to marry couples that want it. Of course, one can't expect people to stand that, and I don't blame 'em. But apart from that there's a prodigious deal too much

casualness about the business. I don't approve of it. I'm all for marriage or nothing. More respectable. Now, do you get much of that sort o' thing in England?"

"Oh, yes. In all countries, no doubt."

"Well, how is it regarded? What are *your* Bastardy laws?"

"We have no penal laws against bastards, nor against their parents."

"Well, but good Gad, how in the world d'you keep 'em under, then?"

"I don't know that we do. The male parent, if identified, has to maintain his offspring while young. And I suppose a certain social stigma attaches, particularly, I believe, to the female parent. . . . But, if you don't mind, I should like to listen."

The Bastardy Bill, which struck Mr. Thinkwell as an uncommonly savage piece of penal legislation, proceeded on its way, its clauses being discussed in the usual dilatory and tedious manner of parliaments.

It was followed by a discussion on the Fermented Liquors Bill, another piece of fierce legislation, directed against those who unlawfully manufactured or sold any kind of fermented drink.

"You make a monopoly of it, then," said Mr. Thinkwell to Mr. Lane, who did not know that word, for he was not a very well informed man, and replied, "Oh, no, just wine to drink."

An isolated voice was raised in favour of the total prohibition of the fermentation of liquor, but this found no support in the House.

"Poor fellow, he always suggests that," said Mr. Lane, tapping a finger on his forehead. "We take no notice. Ever hear such a suggestion in your country?"

"Oh, yes, there is quite a party for it. Largely women, I believe."

"Oh, women. Fortunately *they* don't count. Or where *should* we be? Not that our women here want anything so crazy as that, but still, you can't trust 'em. . . . That's all they're going to do with the Liquor Bill to-day. Now we have the Noxious Herbs, Roots, and Berries Bill."

Mr. Thinkwell listened for a time to the discussion on this bill.

"Very paternal," he commented. "Even impertinent."

"Impertinent?"

"Certainly. It seems to be aimed at preventing people from chewing or eating things they desire to chew or eat. That is what I call impertinent."

"Well, you know, you can't let people make hogs of themselves as they please. Else where *are* you? They'll chew themselves stupid with these roots and berries and things. Lie about, you know, good for nothing, doing no work. We can't have that."

"Why not? It seems their own business."

"Well, 'pon my soul, that's a rum way to look at it. Is it the English way?"

"Not, unfortunately, the way of the English Government. Our Government is just about as impertinent as yours. Governments mostly are, I believe. . . . Dear me, how they do talk, to be sure! Here as there. . . . And on somewhere about the same level of intelligence. How long do they go on?"

"We stop in good time for three o'clock dinner, whatever point we may have reached by then."

"That, at any rate, is more sensible than they are in London. It is very near three now."

A few minutes later, in the middle of a rather ram-

bling speech by an elderly member on palm-root chewing orgies, in the middle, in fact, of a sentence, the Speaker rose, said loudly, "The House is up," and walked away.

"Capital," said Mr. Thinkwell, as the House dispersed. "A capital end. We might well take example by it. There are very few of our speakers but would not be better for being cut short half-way."

Mr. Lane agreed that the majority of speakers were like that. Then Mr. Albert Smith, looking parliamentary and important, and pleased that Mr. Thinkwell had seen him being a Prime Minister, joined them, and invited Mr. Thinkwell to dinner. Mr. Thinkwell accepted.

"But later in the day," he thought, "I must make acquaintance with some of the working people. All these Smiths—I should very much like to learn the point of view of their poorer neighbours about them. Another thing I must do shortly is to visit Hibernia, where there seems always to be so much trouble."

CHAPTER XVII

FLORA

I

While Mr. Thinkwell observed the educational and constitutional customs of the island, Charles and Rosamond visited its commercial quarter, which they found to be on the eastern side, thus kept cool by the south-east trade winds, which blew for most of the season between March and October. This kept the fish, meat, and butter fresher than if they had been sold in the windlessness of the lee side.

Stalls for the sale of these provisions, as well as of fruits of all kinds, sweetmeats, cigarettes, roots for chewing, unfermented drinks, sugar, liquorice, soap, candles, oil, baskets, mats, screens, cocoa-nut and bark cloth, string, cushions, feathers, clothes, skin shoes, wooden toys, hats, skins, scents, and powders, pearls, medicines, coral and shell ornaments, tortoise shell, and many other useful and ornamental commodities, were set out in rows between the wood and the beach. The stall-keepers, of whom a considerable proportion had long and aquiline noses, smooth, sallow skins, and curly hair, pressed their wares on passers-by, something after the manner of similarly featured shopkeepers in some districts of London.

The island was busy shopping, this Monday morning. The Thinkwells saw Mrs. Albert Edward Smith, with a large basket, examining fish at the fish stall and prodding sucking-pigs at the meat-shop. She did not, apparently, trust such important errands to her serv-

ants, but, like a good housewife, did her own marketing. The Thinkwells heard her putting those mysterious inquiries made by food-shoppers—"Is pig nice to-day?" "Can you recommend your tortoise meat?" "Is crab really good this morning?" and so forth.

At another stall Mrs. Smith-Carter, in her palanquin, her monkey on her shoulder, was looking at green parokeets, of which she desired to buy a pair for pets. Her manner of shopping was prouder and nobler than her sister-in-law's, and one remembered that she was Smith born, and Mrs. Albert Edward only Orphan. It is not really Smith to go shopping for food with a market bag; that is a servant's job. Mrs. Smith-Carter only shopped for luxuries.

"These are very poor birds, Isaacs. Twenty corals each? The idea! Just look at their plumage—no sheen on it at all. Here, take 'em away. Birds like that ain't any use to me. I want *good* looking birds, not scarecrows, I told you before. If you don't take more pains to get the right articles, Isaacs, I shall see that you lose your licence. Pray have the birds for me by to-morrow. And I shan't give twenty corals for them unless they're worth it. The bark cloth stall next, Zacharies."

"So you've come shopping, too?"

The clear, half-mocking voice of Flora spoke behind the Thinkwells, and there she stood at a perfumery stall, idly turning over closed shells of scent with her slim brown fingers, and examining coloured powders and fragrant lotions.

"But those metal discs of yours won't go here, you know," she added. "You'll have to go and get some money before you can shop. Come to the sweet stall and we'll buy sweetmeats. Rosamond likes sweet-

meats, I know, and so do I. Better, really, than those silly lotions and powders. Do *you* like sweetmeats, Charles?"

Her light, cool, mocking glance held his; her dark eyes smiled at him between their fringes of black lash. Charles's heart melted in his breast like wax before flame, and he followed her to the sweet stall. Rosamond followed, too; she also was as wax in the flame. Flora bought sweetmeats and fruit and green-leaf cigarettes.

"There," she said, "I've finished my money—all I have with me. Now I've a mind to go sailing. Will you come, Thinkwells? Where is William? I enjoy William; he must come, too. And Heathcliff shall come and row for us if the wind drops. The sea looks as smooth as—oh, as what, Charles? You're a poet, you should know."

"As pearls," said Charles. "As your voice."

2

They went down to the sea, to where boats were pulled up on the shore—roughly made, almost square boats, of chestnut wood caulked with resin and pitch. Flora went up to one of them which had "Yams" painted on it, and carried a brown sail.

"This is ours. And there is Heathcliff on the isthmus, talking to—— Oh, well, never mind him. Here is William coming down with his net. William, we are going for a sail. You'll come?"

"As far as the reef," said William. "I want to land on the reef and look for sea snakes. Mr. Lane told me there are plenty, and that they come into holes in the reef. I've been seeing his tortoises and pigs. But he went away to parliament; I don't know why. Are

Heathcliff and Conolly coming? They're walking this way."

"No," said Flora coolly. "Come on, let's get off."

They ran the *Yams* down through creaming ripples into the lagoon, climbed in, and in a moment were beating out from shore before a soft, light breeze, Flora holding the sheet.

Heathcliff's voice hailed them from shore.

"Where are you off to? Peter and I might come, too."

"You're too late," Flora called back, without turning her head.

They made for the gap in the reef, half a mile out from shore. Beyond the line of surf that broke there with its eternal crooning song, the sea ran in a light swell beneath the south-east trade. But the lagoon was still and smooth, still and clear and the colour of aquamarine, lightly smudged with wind on the surface. In its opal depths and down on its bright weedy floor, seen through swaying green lights, strange fishes swam. Once a sharp dark fin broke the surface with eddies.

"There's a shark come in," said Flora. "What a bore. That means we can only swim close to the shore till he's caught. Lord, how happy I shall be to bathe in English seas, with no sharks!"

"You won't be happy to bathe in English seas," Charles said. "That gives no one happiness; it's like plunging about in drifts of snow. Brave, but not agreeable."

"Snow?"

"Oh, a horrid white stuff we have over there. It falls from the skies and lies on the ground. Disgusting."

"Of course, I remember; they had it in *Wuthering Heights*. A droll country, England must be. Still, I

mean to enjoy it. . . . Do you want to be put down here, William?"

They sidled up close to the reef, where it shelved gently down to the lagoon. William stepped out of the boat, slipped on wet coral, clung on with his hands, got his footing, and hoisted himself on to the reef.

"Do you get off, too, Rosamond?" Flora asked. She was casual and indifferent, but Rosamond, who had meant to go sailing, stood up and said "Yes," and climbed on to the reef. "Here," said Flora, "catch," and flung them a box of sweets.

The *Yams* swung away, and made straight for the gap, running adroitly between the two surfing points and so out to sea.

William began to hunt in holes for sea snakes, Rosamond to walk and crawl along the reef. They were both very happy, like absorbed little boys.

3

Charles was happy, too, bounding on the open blue sea before the light wind with Flora. They ran straight out to sea, then tacked, and sailed round the island.

"Are you anxious for a proper dinner, Charles?" Flora asked him.

"Not particularly. Why?"

"Because, if you're not, let's picnic. We'll run into the lagoon from this side and land in that cove there and picnic in the woods. There's plenty of food there, and we have sweets and fruit with us in the boat. I shall prefer it vastly to dinner at the Yams. How tired I do get, to be sure, of my papa and mamma! Do you get tired of yours, Charles? Does every one?"

"A good many people do. My mother's dead, and

I don't live with my father now I'm grown up. But I quite like him. As fathers go, he's not at all bad."

"No. Only rather queer and dry. I like him. Now mine is not to be endured. Could you endure him, if he was your papa?"

"Certainly not. I can never endure Prime Ministers. And a Smith Prime Minister. . . . Has he always been like that?"

"Since I knew him. That's twenty years. . . . England may improve him. He can't be Prime Minister there, I suppose, can he?"

"No. But even if he was he wouldn't be able to boss the whole island, as he does here. Is he looking forward to England?"

"Yes. I think he hopes to have some great position there."

"Well, he won't."

"Don't tell him that, or he may decide not to go. . . . Do you know, from what I heard papa saying to Uncle Denis yesterday, I don't believe grandmamma is a bit pleased by your coming."

"She's an ungrateful old lady, your grandmamma. We noticed that. And selfish. Doesn't want the Orphans to be rescued, whoever is."

"I believe she'd rather we all went on as we are. You see, she has everything her own way here. She'll never be so great again, poor grandma, and I suppose she half guesses it, in her clearer moments, when she's not fancying herself Queen Victoria."

They landed in the cove, and pulled up the boat on the sands, helped by two respectful fisher lads.

"Now for the woods," said Flora. "It will be agreeable in the shade, I must say. . . . That brother and sister of yours will do very well without us; there are

plenty of fishermen to row them in when they are tired of the reef."

"Oh, they'll be all right. William never gets tired of looking for animals, nor Rosamond of scrambling about. I'm glad they stayed there; I don't want them with us, do you?"

"I don't care. . . . They amuse me, Rosamond and William, though they aren't chatterboxes like you. However. . . . Shall I make one of those men gather fruit for us to take up the hill? Johnson!"

A small lean man, engaged, with others, in extracting various products from the trees, came forward, touching his leaf hat.

"Miss?"

"We want fruit, Johnson. Bread-fruit; mangoes; bananas; no, no plantains, I detest them. And a half-ripe cocoa-nut. Pierce it for us. Be quick, if you please."

"Why not pick them ourselves?" Charles inquired.

"Why should we? What are the workmen for, if not to take trouble for us?"

"Well, I suppose they have their work. That man, for instance—what was he doing when you called him?"

"Johnson? Getting sago from a sago palm, it seems."

"Sago! How disagreeable! I'm glad you interrupted him. You don't escape sago, then, even in Polynesia."

"No, indeed. We are all brought up on it."

"Tapioca, too?"

"I don't know that. Is it as bad?"

"Worse. The lumps are larger. . . . The palm trees seem to be great centres of industry. What are they doing over there with the trunks?"

"Oh, different things. Some are getting palm wine, some oil, some resin. . . . Look out, that nut only just missed you. . . . Palm trees give us (under Providence, as papa says) nearly everything we have—food, drink, light, clothes, soap, thatch, cups to drink from, everything. How one is bored at school, learning the products of the palm tree! You see all those workshops down there; they're making cloth in them and candles, and soap, and twenty other things."

"There must certainly be work for every one here. You can't suffer from unemployment, as we do."

"Unemployment? Not working? Do you call that suffering? In any case, the Orphans don't suffer from it; it's a Smith privilege, not working. Though grandmamma and all of them teach us how wrong it is to be idle, and bid us consider the ant, and so on, actually the Smiths have to be rather idle, because none of the work except being in parliament (if that's work) is Smith. Of course, Smiths can't be expected to do Orphan jobs; it would be lowering. . . . Not that *I* don't work; I am sure I have a dozen things I ought to be doing at home this morning, if I weren't taking you out. All my hats want re-trimming, and I ought to be washing my hair and speaking to my dressmaker. . . . Thank you, Johnson, these will do nicely. We'll put them in my shopping bag, and you can carry it, Charles. We'll climb to the top of the hill, and then we'll sit and eat, and you shall tell me more tales of England. There's a vast deal more I want to hear. . . . Take care—that's a scorpion by your foot. And that tree stings if you touch it. I am sure walks in England are not quite so painful."

"Oh, yes, worse. We have nettles and brambles and wasps and hornets and snakes and mosquitoes and

harvest bugs and barbed wire. One comes home torn and swollen and bleeding. The country is very dangerous everywhere. And London still more so, because of motor traffic."

"What's that?"

"Monstrous machines on wheels, that rush roaring along the streets and knock people down. But," Charles added, "don't let me alarm or depress you about London. You'll like it very much. The great thing is to be *inside* one of the machines, then you're safe. . . . I shall simply love showing it all to you. I want you to meet all my friends; they mean well, though you'll think them queer, I dare say, at first. Anyhow, they'll adore you."

"Will they? I shall like that, of course."

Thus amicably conversing, they climbed to the top of the hill, and there rested in the shade of a thicket and ate their meal. The lagoon lay below them, a shimmering jewel under the hot noonday, and on the reef half a mile out crawled the little figures of Rosamond and of William. Other little figures fished from boats or rafts in the lagoon, and here and there a boat bobbed on the open sea beyond.

"Always the same old view," said Flora. "But in a short while we shall be sailing away out of sight of it, making for the World. Dear world. . . . I can scarcely believe it, Charles. I am afraid of waking. Such exciting things are dreams, not truth."

"That," said Charles, "is exactly what I am feeling about you, Flora. And I am afraid of waking, too."

CHAPTER XVIII

MR. THINKWELL AND THE LOWER ORDERS

I

MR. THINKWELL, after an excellent dinner at the Yams, and an hour's rest after it in his own house (he really felt that he had spent a rather arduous morning), strolled out again with the intention of making the acquaintance of some of the Orphans in their dwellings or at their work. He had declined the company of Mr. Albert Smith on this expedition, for he felt that, unescorted by Smiths, he would be the better able to make friends with such of the lower classes as might come his way.

He walked first to a little colony of small, inferior houses, scarcely more than huts, that stood on the edge of the wood not far from Belle Vue. Outside some of these small dwellings women sat, with infants, sewing, or beating out bark, or stripping the fibrous covering from cocoa-nuts, or otherwise utilising one or another of the products of this useful nut. Most of the women seemed busy in some way. In an enclosed pool at the edge of the lagoon some of them washed clothes.

"Good-afternoon," Mr. Thinkwell said, accosting thus a woman engaged with a cocoa-nut. She looked up respectfully, and returned his greeting.

Mr. Thinkwell then inquired what, at the moment, she did, and she informed him that she was extracting oil for lamps.

"Do you," he asked, "work all day at these nuts?"

She said no, sometimes she made or washed clothes, cleaned her house, and prepared meals for herself and her family.

"It does not sound," said he, "as if you had much leisure in your day."

At this she behaved like Lord Nelson, inquiring what leisure might be, for (said she, in effect), she never saw it.

"I mean," said Mr. Thinkwell, "that you are always busy."

The poor woman agreed that she was, for her part, always one to be that. Some people could be happy idle, others could not, that was how the world was made, and God made us all. Always busy; yes, that was her. And her bits of work helped out her husband's wages; he worked in the woods for Mr. Albert Smith.

"If it isn't impertinent," said Mr. Thinkwell ("and I merely ask because I am collecting facts of all kinds about the life here), how much does your husband earn?"

Her reply was in terms of shells and pieces of coral, and was therefore somewhat obscure to him.

"Is that a good living wage?" he asked her; and she answered that they could just do on it, no more, with what she herself earned.

"I see. A hard life." Mr. Thinkwell pondered. "Are the workers contented," he asked, "with their wages, the distribution of property, their conditions generally?"

The woman said that was what the men talked about when they got together, and they weren't contented at all, but what was the good of fancying things different, when they were as they were, and always had been?

"I see you are a fatalist," said Mr. Thinkwell, and changed the subject, asking her if she hoped to leave the island, to which she replied that this would make a nice change if it should come about, though it would be a bit of an upset, too, with baby and all, but she was sure she didn't know if it would happen. Her husband thought that the poor people like themselves would be left out of the trip.

"Not at all," Mr. Thinkwell assured her. "There will be no discriminations of the kind you suggest, whatever may be arranged. I gather, then, that you would like, yourself, to go?" He felt that he ought to be discouraging, but to use influence was all against his habit of scientific inquiry.

"Well," she said, "one does get a bit tired of always doing the same work in the same place, year after year. Yes; I'd like a change very well. So would my husband. Would there be good living now, in England, for people like us?"

Mr. Thinkwell hesitated. Would there?

"Well," he said, "England is perhaps a little overcrowded. Yes; decidedly overcrowded. . . . But all this can be settled later. Shall I interrupt your work on the nuts if I sit down and talk to you for a while?"

For he had a desire to become acquainted with the minds and points of view of female Orphans. The female Orphan, polite though a little shy, cleared a place for him among the cocoa-nuts, and he sat down on the ground by her side and conversed.

But the conversation did not prove a great success. Mr. Thinkwell was not very much used to conversing, except with Cambridge people, who know about colleges and planets and intelligent things, and whose minds one can easily follow. He did not talk a great deal to women, and to poor women scarcely at all. His

manner, though kind, was a little alarming to persons of a muddled and incoherent habit of mind and speech; he seemed to take them up rather too precisely and thoroughly, and continually to be assuming that their remarks meant more than was the case, which, though flattering, was confusing. For his part, he was interested by such persons, but at times a good deal puzzled, since their minds seemed to move in a mysterious way which he could not by any means always follow.

So, on the whole, the conversation between Mr. Thinkwell and the poor female Orphan was not very fruitful. He was interested, however, to discover in her a sentiment of great loyalty and respect towards Miss Smith.

"Ah, there ain't many like her," she said, with conviction, and Mr. Thinkwell agreed that this was probably the case. But, when he pursued the question as to where, in detail, lay Miss Smith's claim to admiration and loyalty, he did not arrive at any more than one arrives at when discussing the Royal Family of Great Britain with one of its loyal subjects. Miss Smith was Miss Smith: she ruled Smith island, and was great and good, and if *she* had her way no one would ever want.

Loyalty to the reigning sovereign: a widespread, though by no means a universal trait, thought Mr. Thinkwell.

2

Presently, wishing his companion good-day with great friendliness, he left her, and made a tour of the shopping quarter, which interested him very much. He made several small purchases, having been provided by Mr. Denis Smith with some island money, and had a little conversation at each stall about the

way in which the various commodities were produced. He then paid a visit to the workshops, for he was like the children and parents in Miss Edgeworth's books, not satisfied until he had watched the manufacture of the articles he saw through all its processes, from the very beginning. He found the workmen, like workmen everywhere, very interesting and intelligent company. They expressed, for the most part, some curiosity as to the world beyond the island, and considerable desire to see it.

"We don't want to be left behind if any one is going," was the general sentiment. "Though they do tell us we shall probably starve if we leave the island."

Mr. Thinkwell, though himself a little uneasy on this point, informed them, somewhat disingenuously, he felt, that, in Great Britain anyhow, one need not actually starve, as those who were unable to earn a livelihood received support from the state. The Orphans thought this an excellent idea, and became more than ever eager to depart to that better land.

Mr. Thinkwell was conversing thus with a maker of pig-skin shoes (who, he learnt, was, like other shoemakers, an atheist), and to the barber (who was, like other barbers, a chatterbox) when they were interrupted by Mr. Albert Edward Smith, who had come for a shave and a hair-cut.

"How now?" he inquired blandly, looking a trifle vexed when he saw Mr. Thinkwell and the little group about him. "Work hours are not over, I think, Dobbs and Tomkins, though conversation time would seem to have taken its place. A time for everything, you know." He indicated with his hand this remark carved on a neighbouring tree.

"Tomkins," he told Mr. Thinkwell, "is our barber.

And Dobbs, I believe, has a good deal of work in hand. Are those shoes of mine ready yet, Dobbs?"

"Not quite, sir." The shoemaker fell more vigorously to work, and the barber hurried into his tent to prepare his implements.

"A shave and a hair-cut," repeated Mr. Thinkwell. "I have, of course, perceived that both occur on the island, but I should be interested to see the process. Have you scissors?"

"Miss Smith," said her son, "had a pair in her reticule, together with other convenient articles, when she was cast up. They have been in our family ever since." He produced them from the pocket of his coat. "Other inferior pairs have, of course, been manufactured of sharply ground shell, which the Orphans use. These sharp shells also serve to shave us. If it would interest you to watch Tomkins at work, pray do so."

Mr. Thinkwell accompanied him into the barber's tent, and watched with some interest while Tomkins covered his patron's chin with a luxuriant lather of cocoa-nut soap and hot sea-water, and proceeded to scrape it with the sharp edge of a very finely ground shell until it was smooth. The process seemed not uncomfortable, as Mr. Smith's expression remained bland and calm. The barber then, taking the Smith family scissors, cut an inch off his client's hair and combed and trimmed his exquisite whiskers. He then dressed both hair and whiskers with a very sweetly smelling lotion, until Mr. Smith reeked delightfully to heaven.

"An excellent preparation, sir," said Tomkins to Mr. Thinkwell. "If I may say so, it would do your own hair good. A little thin on the top, I see, sir; and some gray hairs on the temples. Perhaps you would allow me to sell you a shellful."

Mr. Thinkwell allowed him.

"If I may say so, sir," said the barber, "Mr. Albert Smith has always used this preparation, and his hair and whiskers do credit to any gentleman. Scarcely any gray to be seen—and only the tiniest bare patch on the crown."

"His bare patch," said Mr. Thinkwell, not vain but accurate, "is, I think, larger than my own."

Mr. Smith changed the subject.

"If you have any fancy to visit Hibernia, Mr. Thinkwell, I shall be very happy to escort you there."

"Thank you," said Mr. Thinkwell, and wondered how he could avoid this and visit Hibernia by himself.

At this point in the conversation there appeared at the barber's entrance a very neat, elegant, slim, young-old gentleman, who seemed in the earlier forties. There was something in his aspect, and in the air with which he wore his close-fitting costume of smooth gray bark fabric, and neat lizard-skin shoes, which indicated the dandy. Behind one ear he had stuck a small scarlet hibiscus bud, and he swung a light cane. He was exquisitely shaved and perfumed, and had a cared-for looking white skin. Mr. Thinkwell had often seen him about, but did not know his name.

He stopped at the entrance to the tent.

"I see you are engaged, Tomkins. . . . Perhaps, Uncle Bertie, you would introduce me to Mr. Thinkwell, whom I haven't yet had the pleasure of speaking to."

Mr. Albert Smith looked at him a little coldly.

"This is my nephew," he said to Mr. Thinkwell. "Mr. Hindley Smith-Rimski."

"How do you do?" said Mr. Thinkwell.

"Very well, I thank you," replied Mr. Hindley Smith-Rimski, bowing very affably. "I am charmed

to have this opportunity of making your acquaintance, sir."

Mr. Thinkwell remembered "Caroline's eldest boy," who had been a leader in that mincing fashion, that affectation of personal elegance, which had arisen among young men at the close of the last century and had affected Miss Smith so disagreeably. He seemed, in spite of his grandmother, to have reverted to floral decoration behind the ear, which suited him remarkably well. He seemed an exquisite man, the flower of island civilisation. One could imagine that he might hold the office of Arbiter Elegantiæ among his peers.

"As Tomkins can't at present cut my hair," he said, "I shall stroll over to Hibernia and see Peter Conolly. Do you care to come, Mr. Thinkwell?"

Mr. Thinkwell was glad to do so. He thought that Hindley Smith-Rimski would be a better escort than Albert Edward Smith, whom they left in the barber's chair having a shampoo.

CHAPTER XIX

THE ARTS, IF ANY

I

"My good uncle," said Hindley, as they took the path round the shore towards Hibernia, "is rather a tedious old bore. I should think you would be glad to be rid of him sometimes."

"Well," Mr. Thinkwell admitted, "he is very kind, but I certainly find Mr. Denis Smith, for example, rather easier company."

"Oh, Uncle Denis is good company enough. But not quite always available. This afternoon, for instance, he dined well, and . . . in short, he dined well. Dear Uncle Denis; he is very amusing, but it is rather vulgar and Orphan of him to get drunk so crudely. For my part, there is a berry I chew, which soothes and stimulates but doesn't intoxicate, so I am never unpresentable, like some of my family. . . . Well, so we are all to see the great world at last. It will be very diverting. Is it all as absurd as this island, I wonder, or can one take it seriously?"

"It is quite absurd," said Mr. Thinkwell, "to many minds. Some, however, succeed in taking it seriously enough. In any case, it has a considerable variety of aspects and modes of life, so is not a monotonous spectacle."

"I do wonder," said Hindley, "how we shall all get on! We egregious Smiths, in particular. *That* spec-

tacle, anyhow, I shall completely enjoy. As for the rest, I find Smith Island entertaining enough for my purposes. I amuse myself very well always."

"How do you pass the time?" Mr. Thinkwell inquired.

"Oh, I stroll about and talk to people. And play chess."

"You have chess, then?"

"Oh, yes. My grandfather was very fond of it, and taught it to his children. I find it a very good game. . . . Then I take my meals, and rest, and chew berries, and write a little."

"Indeed! What do you write?"

"All kinds of things. Prose and verse. It has always been my recreation."

"I wish you would show me some of your writings."

"By all means; there is nothing I enjoy more than showing off. That, too, has always been a favourite recreation of mine. I believe that I write rather well. I notice that most of those who write believe that. In any case, I enjoy my own things. But I dare say you will despise them. The arts, you see, haven't had many models to follow on Smith Island. We have had to rely on our natural gifts. I believe I am a little gifted. But far less so than my sister's son, young Peter Conolly, who paints pictures. I should like to show you those. That enchanting youth is a great favourite of mine; he has, I think, genius as well as beauty. I am half in love with him, and half with his Flora. An exquisite pair. It would seem a pity if they should ever marry, and become staid unromantic parents. I have a passion for celibacy; it is more elegant—don't you agree with me?"

"Really, I never thought about it," said Mr.

Thinkwell. He was not quite sure that he liked this suave, talkative man. Of course one met him elsewhere; he was an eternal type; one had met him in ancient Greece and Rome, and one met him in Cambridge, in Oxford, in London; even, it has been said, in Manchester, if not in Glasgow, and on this island that they all persisted in calling Smith. There was something rather tiresome about Hindley, in spite of his intelligence and his bland charm.

"I suppose," said Mr. Thinkwell, "that there must have been a good deal of writing here, as in other places."

"Oh, yes. It is a disease which a great many of our young men and women pass through; fortunately they mostly come safely out on the other side. Probably you have only heard from my uncles of the official library—that queer collection of out-moded books which my grandparents thought fit to bring to this island when they began life here. No one nowadays pays any attention to those old books; we have our modern literature, most of which the last generation despises."

"Indeed! I remember little mention of literature in Miss Smith's journal."

"No. My grandmamma regards modern literature as a vice. She used, in the days when she went about and cast her eye over all of us to see how we were behaving, to see some of us writing, but she called it wasting time, and said it was ridiculous to think that we could write anything with none of the great literary models before us. As to models—*that* was the sort of model she provided us with." He pointed with his cane to the stalwart trunk of a banian tree, down which was carved three stanzas of poetry.

"There is a dreadful Hell,
And everlasting pains;
There sinners must with devils dwell,
In darkness, fire, and chains.

Can such a wretch as I
Escape this cursed end?
And may I hope, whene'er I die,
I shall to Heaven ascend?

Then will I read and pray,
While I have life and breath,
Lest I should be cut off to-day
And sent to eternal death."

"That," said Hindley, "is my worthy grandmamma's idea of good verse. She says there are also the great English poets—Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Gray, Dr. Akenside, Southey, Cowper, Mrs. Hemans, and Alfred Tennyson—but, beyond a little here and there, she didn't know them by heart or make us acquainted with them. And, as she thinks Dr. Watts, the author of that poem, good, I dare say those others aren't much better. So, you see, poets on this island have had to work on their own lines. Prose writers, too."

"Have you much prose?"

"A good deal, yes. A long time ago a few people took to writing down the stories that were told in the evenings by the older people, and then to inventing others for themselves. Often they are about island life, often about what we imagine life in the wider world to be. You would find them great nonsense, no doubt. As to myself, I used, when I was young, to write a great deal of verse, but for some years now I have only written prose. I began once a kind of satiric

history of Smith Island, which I occasionally write up to date, and which might amuse you. I have an idea that it may possibly interest the world at large, now that we are to leave the island."

"I should say it certainly would. That, published in combination with Miss Smith's journal, would make immensely interesting reading. Is much of the island literature preserved?"

"A good deal, and most of it not worth preserving. We write on skin or bark, you know. Of course there has always been a great quantity written and destroyed, or written on the sands, merely to pass the time. We have stories written that way, a piece every evening, for people to read, together with that ridiculous newspaper. But people are apt to preserve their own literary efforts so far as they can; we most of us have a curious tenderness for what we write. I am the island librarian, and take charge of such writings as are delivered to me. A great deal of it is sad rubbish, I fear. . . . Here we are in Hibernia. And there is my dear Peter, alone and looking a little cross. Perhaps he has had to extract a tooth. Shall we go and cheer him up by admiring his pictures? I can tell you that, whenever you see me looking sad, you can cheer me by reading, with suitable admiration, my works. . . . Well, Peter? How goes the world with you? I have brought Mr. Thinkwell, not to have his teeth out, but to see your pictures."

Nogood Peter certainly did look sulky. He scarcely even brightened at the mention of his pictures. However, he got up from the rock where he had been sitting, and accompanied his uncle and Mr. Thinkwell to a small dwelling close by. A good-looking, dark-haired, blue-eyed woman of about Hindley's age sat at the door idly, looking at the sea.

"Good evening, Cathy," Hindley said. "We are come to see Peter's pictures. Let me introduce to you Mr. Thinkwell. My sister, Mrs. Michael Conolly."

Mrs. Michael Conolly nodded to Mr. Thinkwell.

"It's fortunate," she said, "that you are come at last to rescue us. Fortunate for the Smith family, as well as for the Orphans."

There was something bitter and grim in her voice and face, and, meeting her strange bright blue eyes, Mr. Thinkwell remembered that she was a Smith-Rimski, the daughter of a Pole, and therefore probably rebellious against the established order. She had, anyhow, married—or not married—a rebel. And her husband worked in ropes at Convict Cove.

"No politics now, my dear Cathy," her brother blandly intervened. "This evening we are interested only in art. The paintings, Peter, please. Bring them out here, where the light is good."

The young man went into the house, and came out shortly with a pile of fine stretched skins and smooth pieces of wood. He laid them on the ground, and Mr. Thinkwell looked at them. The paintings on them were mostly of island scenes; seascapes and landscapes painted in bright, pure colours, crudely and simply drawn, primitive and naïve, but with some force. Mr. Thinkwell did not know whether the painting was good, as painting; he was no art critic, and, further, he was, philosophically, something of a nihilist as regards the meaning of the words "good" and "bad" in any sphere. What he did know was that this painting would, in England, have a tremendous and immediate success. Its very naïveté and originality, its break with tradition, would make an appeal, and European critics, for ever falling for new things, would fall most certainly for this. Mr. Thinkwell perceived that young Conolly

need have no fears for his future: his success as an artist was sure. He would, no doubt, start a whole school of foolish imitators.

Mr. Thinkwell looked at the paintings one by one, in silence. He was a man of few words. All he said, when he had finished, was "Very interesting indeed. Very attractive."

"I thought you would find them so," Hindley said. "Will they be a success in England, should you say?"

Mr. Thinkwell did not care for talking of art (or anything else) in terms of success, and merely replied that, whether or no, they were uncommonly interesting. He took them up again in turn, and looked at them more closely, spending, indeed, such a great while over them that Mr. Smith-Rimski became a little bored, for he wanted Mr. Thinkwell to come to his house and admire his writings.

"Delightful, aren't they," he said, switching his cane about. "How do they compare, pray, with modern European art?" (Hindley showed a less Britannic tendency than most of the islanders, by speaking less of England and more of Europe.)

"Very different, so far as I can judge," said Mr. Thinkwell. "The range of colours is small, of course. . . . But there is no object in making comparisons. I hope," he said to Peter, "that you will go on, and do a great deal more."

Peter looked only moderately pleased. He had hoped for more admiration. He had hoped that Mr. Thinkwell would have told him he would be a great artist in England, and that he could have repeated this to Flora.

"Yes," he said, rather moodily, "I shall go on. It's what I like doing."

"He's always at it," said his mother, also moodily. "Thinks of nothing else. I should like him to speak and write about the wicked laws and oppressions, that his father gave his freedom for—but Peter's not interested in anything but paint."

"There, Cathy," her brother soothed her. "Michael will soon be free now, you know."

"Will he? How do I know they won't put him in prison in England?"

"As he has committed no crime against English law," said Mr. Thinkwell, "that is most improbable."

Her uncomfortably brilliant blue eyes burned on his face. She looked white and frail, and too young to be the mother of Nogood Peter.

"Well, now," said Hindley, "do you want to call on any one else in Hibernia, Mr. Thinkwell, or would you care to walk with me to my little place and see some of our literature? I have quite a library there. This isn't a good hour for visiting, because most people who aren't out fishing are on the shore over there watching that absurd news come out. I imagine you'll agree with me that we can dispense with that. A very stupid, tedious, vulgar performance."

"Yes," Mr. Thinkwell agreed. "I have enough of that at home. By all means I will come and see your library."

Before leaving Hibernia they went down to its shore, where a small knot of persons was assembled, closely grouped round one who was writing on the sand with a stick.

"One of the unofficial journals that comes out in the evenings," said Hindley. "Dull stuff. Nearly as tedious as the official news. It is mainly a catalogue of grievances, together with rousing addresses to the Orphans to withstand the Smith tyrannies."

"What we call Red journalism."

"Do you? I don't know why you call it that; but I have no doubt it thrives in all countries. On the other part of the island there are plenty of unofficial journals, too; they are more amusing, but also more vulgar. Particularly on Sundays, when all the scandals, both among Smiths and Orphans are chronicled. People seem to require particularly spicy literature on Sundays—I suppose from lack of other occupation. Are your Sunday journals like that?"

"I have never noticed it," said Mr. Thinkwell, who saw the *Observer* and the *Sunday Times,* and did not know much about other Sunday papers.

"My house," said Mr. Smith-Rimski.

2

The house of Mr. Smith-Rimski was a small, elegant building, its wooden walls tastefully plastered with oyster shells. Inside it was carpeted with plaited palm, and on the walls hung paintings. A table stood at one side, holding bowls of brilliant flowers and a chess-board with roughly-cut wooden pieces.

"I must," said Hindley, "have beauty about me. Also chess-men. Do you play? You must have a game with me some time. But now for this literature." He gave Mr. Thinkwell a chair, and produced delicious drinks and the curious island cigars.

"Would you care to chew a nut?" he asked. "They have a stimulating and soothing quality all their own, these nuts. It is forbidden to sell them or possess them, but all these little difficulties are easily surmounted. You won't? But you won't mind if I do, I'm sure." He took a long-shaped brown nut, like an almond, out of a box, and put it in his mouth.

"And now for the literature."

He opened a mahogany cupboard, which contained shelves stacked with sheets of skin and bark. He took down a bundle of these and laid them on the table.

"These are my own little attempts, including the history. You'll find a good number of early poetic effusions among them. This kind of thing." He handed Mr. Thinkwell a poem called *Wakefulness*, which began,—

"I wake and hear the amorous tortoise cry;
The ripe nuts tumble thudding from the tree;
I watch the moon, an evil golden eye,
Stare wanly at me o'er the purple sea."

It had eight stanzas. Mr. Thinkwell read it through, and laid it down without comment.

"An early effort," said Hindley, "and probably written after an evening of intemperance. A little morbid, you are thinking."

"Not at all," said Mr. Thinkwell. "A little commonplace, perhaps, as young people's verse is apt to be. I am very much interested to see it."

Slightly nettled, but still bland and well bred, Hindley gave him some of his own essays to read. These Mr. Thinkwell found better. Hindley had a gay, amusing pen; his descriptions were entertaining and his comments apt. A tendency to a rather Petronian wit was held in check by a natural well-bred discretion. The same qualities marked the Satiric History, in which Mr. Thinkwell found a good deal of entertainment and interest. Decidedly Hindley Smith-Rimski had talent, for all his foppish airs.

Mr. Thinkwell's pleasure in his prose consoled the author for his lack of appreciation of his verse, and put him in a very good humour over supper, which

they had before Mr. Thinkwell went on to read the other literature in the library. After the elegant and delicious repast had been consumed, and its indications removed by a beautifully trained young Zachary Macaulay, host and guest settled down to smoke, sip a pleasant liquor, and read.

The literature was a miscellaneous collection of short and long stories, verse (for the most part either merely conventional or shockingly bad, but here and there having originality and occasionally some beauty or charm), and long or short prose essays. There were some political writings. One revolutionary poem, dated 1910 and signed "Michael Conolly," began—"Orphans, arise! throw off the tyrants' yoke," and ended—"To that great day when Smiths shall be no more."

"My unfortunate brother-in-law," said Hindley, "was always rather a politician than a poet—though not very successful even in that capacity, as you know. . . . See, here are some samples of our most modern verse—the kind the young men and women are writing to-day."

The most modern verse had a good deal of swing and tune about it, and less of the moralising of much of the earlier poetry, which was still under the influence of Dr. Watts. Its most marked characteristic was a peculiar habit of ending in the middle of a sentence, "so as to avoid the obvious," Hindley explained. "Do young English poets adopt that device? Your son Charles is a poet, I hear. I am anxious to make his acquaintance."

"Yes, I believe Charles writes verse, among other things. I read very little modern verse, but I fancy it is not, for the most part, much like this. Charles will be able to tell you better as to that. . . . Have

you, by the way, that curious branch of literature, the *novel*?"

"Nothing so long as to be called that, if *Wuthering Heights* is the standard. There are difficulties as to writing materials, you see. The serial stories written daily on the shore are pretty long sometimes, but they are rubbed out when read."

"An excellent idea, indeed. Sand is a most appropriate material, and should be more widely used."

"Have you many novels?"

"I believe a very great many indeed."

"And are they good reading?"

"Roughly speaking, no. But no worse, I imagine, than most short stories, verse, or plays."

"Ah, plays we don't have here. My old grandmamma has always forbidden them, on moral grounds."

"*Moral*? Why so?"

"Oh, I can't explain grandmamma's notions. The old lady has always been rather mad, I fancy. Anyhow, plays are wicked, and players worse, so we have had no drama in our island home. We amuse ourselves in the evening by dancing, or games, or telling stories. Perhaps, if you feel you have sampled enough of our literature for the moment, you would like to stroll out and watch some of these innocent entertainments.

3

They strolled out into the dark, warm, close-growing woods, into which the low moon scarcely looked. They followed the thin path until they came out on to the open glade which ran round the wood's edge above the shore. Here lights burned, and people sat about in groups, talking and playing games or telling stories. The largest group sat round a little old Jewess; her

cracked voice rose high and excited, her withered hands gesticulated as she told her tale, which seemed to be of the penny dreadful type.

"A great story-teller, old Leah," Hindley said. "Look, there is your son, with Flora."

True enough, Flora and Charles sat together on the edge of the group round Leah.

"Peter will be jealous," said Hindley, "if your Charles steals his Flora from him like this. They've been together all day, those two."

Charles looked round and saw his father.

"Where are William and Rosamond, Charles?"

"Gone out spearing fish in the lagoon, with a fisherman they've picked up with. You should come and listen to this; it's worth it."

Mr. Thinkwell stood and listened. Hindley strolled away.

The high old voice rose and fell, cracked and quavered and shrilled, above the murmur of the sea and the soft ruffle of the wind in the palms.

CHAPTER XX

ISLAND DAYS

I

To Nogood Peter Conolly, apathetically working in his dentist's tent, fiercely painting pictures, patiently searching for new colours in shells and flowers and shrubs, these days after the landing of the Thinkwells became gradually filled with an odd, new, and very bitter pain, a pain which seared even the joyful prospect of the new life which had so suddenly and amazingly opened before him; a pain which deepened and intensified day by day, and to which he foresaw no end.

Flora had left him for Charles Thinkwell: that was how it appeared to him. She was with Charles Thinkwell all day, every day; that he loved her any one could see; that she, if she did not love him (and whom, thought Peter bitterly, did Flora love, beyond herself?) meant to have him, seemed only too likely. She was caught, he supposed, by the novelty of Charles, by the glamour of strangeness he carried, the romantic aroma of Europe and London; she, who was sick of the tediousness of island life, and had always longed for the world beyond, might well be ensnared by these. No doubt, too, she would like the position he could offer her; like to appear in London town as the affianced wife of a fashionable young Londoner. Yet, was Charles fashionable? After all, thought Peter sulkily, he was but a writer, and writing, Rosamond had said, was not very Smith.

But still, there it was. Peter seldom got speech

alone with Flora now. When he did, she would put him off, declaring that she would make no promises; yesterday was one thing, to-morrow quite another. "And to-day," she added, "quite a third."

He had, of course, made her angry by refusing to say that he would give up painting when he got to London and go in for some more spectacular and fashionable line of life. They had quarrelled about this on Sunday evening, and since then she would have none of him.

Peter did not dislike Charles on any other grounds. He, like the other islanders, thought the whole Thinkwell family very odd, but he did not dislike them.

The islanders, as the days went by, became used to this strange family among them. They became familiar figures; Mr. Thinkwell, the dark, odd, learned, interested man, who looked closely at everything through glass eye-windows as he went about, making notes every now and then in the little book he carried, making inquiries about everything he saw, puzzling over simple remarks made to him, taking them literally when obviously they were meant loosely, enormously interested in small things and great. It became the fashion among some of the more inventive of the population to tell Mr. Thinkwell all kinds of things calculated to interest him, whether true or false. . . . He deserved this attention, it was felt. As old Jean had taught them in childhood, "Gin ye dinna speer nae questions, ye winna be tauld nae lees."

The younger Thinkwells too, were popular; Charles, the graceful, pleasant-mannered young man, to whom Flora Smith had taken a fancy and who had no eyes for any one else, though Hindley Smith-Rimski and all the literary set tried to get hold of him; William, the square-headed boy who was for ever hunting about

for small animals with field glasses and a net, and who made friends with woodmen and fishermen; Rosamond, the funny, silent young girl, with her little round freckled face and grave, gray eyes and yellow hair cut round her neck in the pretty fashion of twenty years ago, and her habit of holding the tip of her pink tongue between her small white teeth when she was absorbed; Rosamond, who climbed the trees and crawled about the rocks, and, like William, watched the woodmen and fishermen at their work, and drank milk and ate fruit at all hours of the day; Rosamond, whose happy grin showed how much she enjoyed life on an island, though she had not many words to waste on it.

Yes, certainly, one liked these Thinkwells, queer though they were.

2

One morning Charles Thinkwell came to the dentist's to have a tooth out. It had, he said, been aching for some time; he fancied it had an abscess.

He found the dentist painting outside his tent.

"That's uncommonly good," he said, surprised, looking over Peter's shoulder.

Peter put his picture away, and spoke of Charles's tooth. He agreed that it seemed like an abscess, and should be extracted. He rubbed the gum with a narcotic juice, and also gave Charles to drink.

"You don't inject, then?" said Charles.

"Inject?"

"Yes. Prick the gum and put the stuff inside."

"No; that's not the way we do it here." He said it arrogantly, implying that Charles did not know what was done in the most advanced dental circles.

Charles, Peter could see, was trying not to look as

if he thought it a pity that was not the way they did it here. Peter was trying not to look as nervous and anxious as he felt. He had a great desire to make a good job of Charles's tooth, to extract it whole with one tug, and without a great amount of pain, so that Charles should not have cause to complain of him.

After a minute of waiting for the narcotics, external and internal, to work, Peter took a pair of wooden pincers and bade Charles open. Charles, though a good deal frightened, opened, was gagged, and gripped tightly the arms of his chair.

The anguish Charles then endured was unspeakable.

"It's coming," said Peter, heaving. Something came, with a crack.

"There. It's broken," said Peter, flushed and vexed. "Open once more, please; we must go on while it's still numb."

Numb! What, Charles speculated deliriously in his agony, would an extraction of Peter's be like were the tooth *not* numb? For his part, he could not feel that the narcotics had made the least difference. . . .

"It's coming," said Peter, heaving again.

This time it really came, root, abscess, and all.

"My God," said Charles.

"Rinse, please," said Peter.

Charles rinsed.

"There it is," said Peter, showing him the tooth. "I am sorry it broke. Rotten teeth are brittle, of course."

Charles mumbled, "It wasn't a rotten tooth. It was a perfectly good tooth, with an abscess. But that's all right, it's gone now."

"Have a drink," said Peter. "This is reviving." He gave him a drink that tasted of gruel and peppermint.

"Now," said Charles presently, feeling rather better, "may I see some of your pictures?"

Peter hesitated. He half wanted to refuse. But the other half of him craved for the opinion of Charles, who knew, probably, more about painting than his father. To make Charles admire his pictures—he would like that.

"Very well," he said.

He could not read Charles's mind as he showed him the pictures. Charles, though in devilish pain, commented, praised, was interested, mumbled once or twice "Good Lord!" Then he fell silent, and Peter did not know what he thought of, or whether the pain in his jaw had overcome him. He did not know that Charles was thinking, "London will go mad about him. If Flora knew that. . . . But, of course, she doesn't. . . ."

"Extraordinarily interesting," said Charles presently. "How do you get your colours?"

Peter explained to him the derivation of each.

They were interrupted by the arrival of another patient, and Charles, after paying his bill, went away. Actually to lie down and recover, but Peter supposed it was to meet Flora somewhere. "Open, please," he said bitterly. And then, "Your teeth are in a shocking state. Very few of them can be saved. You had better wait till you get to England, and have them all out there and get new ones. It's very little use *my* doing anything to them."

He never wanted to do anything to any teeth again.

3

The days passed slowly by. Slowly to the Thinkwells because each was so new, so delightful, so many-coloured, and so strange. Like some lovely fruit that

puts forth, ripens, and tumbles, over-mellow, to the ground, between dawn and nightfall, so each lovely day rose from the sea, small and gold and exquisite, ripened to a hot and fragrant noon, and slid rosily into the sea again, leaving the island afloat beneath the myriad eyes of a vast and purple night.

It was the fine season. Had they been there a few months later, they were told, there would have been storms, seas, rains, thunders, monsoons. As it was, the only storm that shook the island was a small earthquake one afternoon, which threw Rosamond from a mango tree so that she badly bit her tongue. William was pleased, because all sorts of new fishes were thrown up on the beach by the earthquake wave.

It was the gay season, in the world of fashion and society. There were dances, banquets, parties, swimming races, tortoise races, sports. The Thinkwells were asked out a great deal. Except Charles, who went where Flora went, and that was everywhere, they did not always accept. William disliked parties, and only attended the sporting events. Mr. Thinkwell did not go to dances, or stay long at parties. He preferred really a game of chess with Hindley Smith-Rimski, with whom he played about level, or a conversation with some one of intelligence, such as Denis Smith or one of the workmen. For the rest, he attended social functions in pursuit of his study of island life.

As to Rosamond, she was rather shy, and though she liked dancing and games and watching tortoises race, she did not, any more here than in Cambridge, care for that kind of party at which one stands about and talks, and consumes now and then some trifling article of food or drink. And banquets were only doubtfully agreeable, though the food was exciting, for you had to make talk with your neighbours. However, Rosa-

mond, in order not to seem rude and ungrateful, often had to attend these functions. The smaller islands, she was discovering, had their social obligations, their unwritten laws, no less than larger ones, and Polynesia and Cambridge were in many ways alike.

It did not greatly matter. There was the island, with its palm trees, its monkeys, its humming birds and bread-fruit, its honey-sweet woods, its blue lagoon, its coral reef and the illimitable Pacific beyond.

Also there was Flora, who, Rosamond was beginning breathlessly to hope, might one day love and marry Charles. Poor Nogood Peter; one pitied him dreadfully, but still, Flora did seem to like Charles better now she knew him, and there it was. To have Flora for sister; to show her England, theatres, fields of cowslips, the Zoo . . . what felicity!

Rosamond's island days were as cups of sweet golden wine, running over at the brim. She counted them, giving to each as it died the tribute of a sigh. One more day gone; one fewer to come before the returning *Typee* bore them away.

Rosamond formed within her mind a scheme, too splendid, probably, to occur. Why should not Flora sail away with them, before the others were fetched? Flora and Heathcliff, perhaps. Flora would then see England first. She could even, directly they got to Cambridge, marry Charles. . . .

Rosamond was too shy to suggest this plan to Flora, but she mentioned it to Charles, who thought it sound, but did not imagine that the Albert Smiths would allow Flora to precede them.

"Shall you ask her to marry you, Charles?" said Rosamond. "I hope you will. Do you think she would?"

Charles bade her mind her own business.

"Well," said Rosamond, "she seems to like you a lot. Aren't you awfully pleased?"

Charles told her not to be a little donkey. Rosamond looked at him with new admiration, because Flora had honoured him with her regard.

4

The birthday of Miss Smith was approaching—the anniversary of the day on which she first saw the light, not that official birthday which she also observed in her capacity as Queen Victoria. It would fall on the day on which the *Typee* was due to return. Extensive preparations for its celebration were going forward.

It was to be a public holiday; there was to be a free banquet for the Orphans, and a paid-for banquet (better food and drink) for the Smiths. Even the convicts were, this year, to have a treat, for Miss Smith had arranged for them to be rowed out to the *Typee* when she was returned, and to be taken for a short sail.

On the question of the transportation of the Orphans, Miss Smith seemed to have come round. She sent for Mr. Thinkwell to tell him so.

"As it seems," she said, "to be the Almighty's will to take us all from the island, we will say no more. What the poor silly creatures will do in England, He who made 'em alone knows, but we must leave it to Him. I make no doubt they'll repent, and be soon wanting to come back. As to ourself, where our people go, we must go. So that's settled, Thinkwell, and off we all start for England when you send for that liner."

Mr. Thinkwell was not at all glad that she had come to this frame of mind. He had trusted in her, that she

would have remained obstinate to the last, and have defended the islanders against themselves. She appeared quite genial and cheerful, and insisted that he should quaff a beaker with her to the success of the plan.

"Our plans," she said, lifting her bowl, "ain't apt to fail. But we'll drink to this one, nevertheless."

She drank well, set down the beaker, and chuckled.

"One more toast, Thinkwell. Drink to my birthday, and to the return of your ship. Deeply, man—no sipping!"

Mr. Thinkwell raised his bowl and Miss Smith hers. Together they drank the toast.

Miss Smith set down her empty goblet.

"That'll do, Thinkwell. You may go."

Mr. Albert Smith said to Mr. Thinkwell, "My mother seems to have changed her mind, and to be now contemplating the removal of the Orphans." He did not look wholly pleased.

"I think they would be wiser to stay where they are," he added, "and I still hope to induce many of them to do so. . . . I am not even sure that Miss Smith has been wise in deciding to take this great step herself. I fear the voyage, and the new conditions, may prove very trying to her. At her advanced age, one is not adaptable. . . ."

Mr. Thinkwell took what comfort he could from those reasonable views.

CHAPTER XXI

THE BIRTHDAY

I

ROSAMOND, sleeping under a banian tree, was woken on the Birthday morning by the sharp talk of monkeys overhead, and by the scurry of a centipede across her face. These creatures had called her just in time, that she might see the Birthday rise, regal and golden, out of the Pacific. She sat up and looked at it. It was being proclaimed by flutings and pipings and trillings, and incensed by pollen-sweet drifts of wind. It was indeed a Birthday. Also, it was a Last Day, and had a bitter-sweet sadness.

Rosamond sipped some milk and bit the end off a banana. A little way off were the huddled forms of William and of Charles. Their light snores mingled agreeably with the other wood sounds, and with the light snoring of the ocean.

Rosamond thought she would bathe while no one was about; she liked to have the Pacific to herself. She stole into Belle Vue, where Mr. Thinkwell slept beneath a roof and between walls, as middle-aged gentlemen like to do. She got into her bathing-dress and went down to the lagoon.

But she was not as alone as she had supposed. On the grass plateau above the shore a bent old woman stood, and her dim, frowning stare searched the Pacific, as though she were dragging the Birthday above the Horizon.

Jean. Jean, impatient, presumably, for the Birth-

day. Jean, watching the sunrise—or watching, marooned old lady, for a sail.

Rosamond bade her good-morning as she passed her. She started.

"Guid-day tae ye, lassie, guid-day. This is a braw day we've got for it."

"For the Birthday? Yes, isn't it?"

"The Bairthday!" Jean emitted a sound as of contempt. "I was no thinking of the Bairthday. For your wee ship, I'm meanin', that's comin' back the day. . . . Did your father tell ye, lassie, that he's promised tae tak me on the wee ship with ye, so as I sall see Scotland afore the gran' vessel can tak us?"

"Good," said Rosamond politely. "Is—are any of the others coming, do you know?"

"I dinna ken. Mr. Thinkwell didna say. Forby, I'd as soon nane of the ithers did come. The young anes can bide a wee while longer, sin it's no their hames they're longin' tae set eyes on, but new lands only; and the auld anes have no my sair longin'. They can all bide for the Lord's guid time and the great ship."

"I thought perhaps Flora . . ."

"Flora! The young limb. The less truck ye all have with Flora the better it sall be for ye. She'll bring ye nae guid. Dinna ye go runnin' after that wild lassie o' Bairtie Smith's, and dinna ye let that brither o' yours fix his hairt on her, for she's nae hairt hersel'. No, no, Flora Smith winna come on the wee ship with me; she'll bide with the ithers. . . . Rin on now, lassie, and tak your swim."

Rosamond left her standing there, peering at the morning horizon.

The lagoon glimmered with the radiant rainbow sheen of spilt milk. Down through it Rosamond dived,

till she was close to its floor, with its fantastic coral mosaics and beamy darts of light, that were sometimes shafts of the morning and sometimes fish. Rosamond clutched at them, grasped instead waving weeds, and shot up through swaying beams into clear air, air thin and sweet like some light golden wine.

She floated on her chest, arms spread, face towards the island, gazing as one gazes into the face of a departing friend.

To leave Orphan Island—Smith Island—whatever island it might be; to leave it on the morrow! To leave the lagoon, the reef, the shore, the woods, the valley with the green lake, the antics of monkeys, the humming birds, scarlet and green and blue, the armadillos, the big thief land crabs that climbed the Smiths' palm trees and stole their nuts, the little scarlet sea crabs that scuttled about the coral pools, the great sea turtles, the land turtles that crawled in the woods, the iguanas, geckos, tortoises, the mangos, bananas, breadfruit, and figs, the paradise birds and the mocking birds, the little silver bird that was like the Holy Ghost, the cow-tree with its warm, gushing stream, the honey in the hollow trees, the trade winds sighing in the treetops and bearing bright pollen about the island, bearing scents of almond, of frangipani, of cloves, of wild roses, of vanilla, of frankincense and myrrh. . . .

To leave the island—it was too much.

Rosamond blinked away tears, with the salt Pacific, from her eyes.

As to Flora—well, whatever old Jean might say, Rosamond did not believe that Charles, far gone in love as he now was, would leave the island without Flora. Either Flora must come, or Charles would stay—one or the other.

And if Charles should stay . . . well, if Charles

should stay, why should not Rosamond stay too, and await the coming of the liner? Why not indeed?

But when Rosamond had hinted as much to Mr. Thinkwell, he had said no, he certainly was not going to leave her behind; she would travel on the *Typee* with him. He had behaved like a father; he was decided, firm, an arbiter of destinies; there was no more to be said.

Turning seaward from the island, as one turns at last from the friend's face which breaks one's heart at parting, Rosamond saw that over the golden horizon there climbed a sail. A sail, a mast, a hull: in brief, a schooner. So the *Typee* had come back, punctual to the day; she had not foundered or deserted or split in two on some hidden reef. Here she was. It was the end of the party, and the carriage had called. . . .

A shrill cry rent the morning.

"The guid Lord be praised for His mairciesl The ship is back!"

On she flew before a light, favouring wind that had sprung up since the dawn. Soon she would be at the gate in the reef. Rosamond, floating in the lagoon, watched her come. Mr. Thinkwell's carriage was cantering, so as to be in time to take Mr. Thinkwell, Miss Thinkwell, and the Masters Thinkwell from the party.

Jean's cry had brought other people down to the shore, all staring seaward, pointing, talking. Then, because the Birthday had begun, trumpets and pipes sounded, ushering it in, welcoming also the *Typee*.

Jean wept. The tears chased down her aged face, her lips worked, and this was always the burden of her speech. "The Lord be thankit for this day! The guid Lord be thankit, that He has let me see Aberdeen ance mair afore I dee!"

2

There was to be a morning service on the Birthday. A brief service of thanksgiving, with hymns and short sermon, and every one was to attend. One was to give thanks for Miss Smith, who had so fortunately seen the light on this day ninety-eight years ago, and had so providentially been preserved. The service, it was announced by the crier, was to be in the middle of the wood, near Balmoral, at noon.

The *Typee* lay at anchor by the reef. Its boat had landed and rowed back again, leaving Captain Paul and Mr. Merton ashore, to spend the day there. Tomorrow the *Typee* was to depart.

"I'm not coming to this service," William said to Charles and Rosamond. "I shall catch crabs and filefish in the pools."

But Charles and Rosamond thought they had better go to the service, so as not to annoy any one on their last day. Besides, Flora would be obliged to go.

Every one was to be there; Miss Smith had been very insistent on that. Every one, that is, but the convicts, who were to have their treat at this hour. They were to row out to the schooner and be taken for a sail. Miss Smith had arranged it through Mr. Denis Smith with Captain Paul, who had sent orders to the crew by his own boat. They were to row out in two island boats, each boat in charge of a warder. Only Captain Paul and the Thinkwells had been told of this treat; it was feared by Miss Smith that, if news of it got about, the island would be jealous.

"Mustn't tell Bertie," Denis said. "Mamma don't want Bertie to know. Bertie'd think it silly. *'Tis* silly, too, that's a fact. But there, it's poor old

mamma's Birthday, and the kind thought does her credit, and the poor fellows don't get much fun in their lives, so there it is. It's to be during church, so people won't see."

Mr. Denis Smith was, as usual, genial. He had, even thus early in the day, not wasted the Birthday.

So, when the trumpets blew at noon and the congregation took their places in the wood, every one but William and the convicts were there.

It was a happy and thankful service. Hymns of praise and gratitude for Miss Smith, who sat in her palanquin by the clergyman's side, rose among the trees, exciting the birds and monkeys from their noon rest, so that these flew in bright, twittering legions above the congregation's heads, and those eagerly cast down bananas and nuts, as if in tribute. There was a sermon, from the text, "And Deborah ruled in Israel three score years and ten, and did that which was pleasing in the sight of the Lord. And the Lord blessed Israel greatly in the days of Deborah."

Mr. Maclean was towards the end of this sermon, when some one came breaking hurriedly through the wood, and William Thinkwell appeared in front of the congregation, stopping by Miss Smith's palanquin, a wet, flushed, dishevelled figure, trousers rolled above the knees, field glasses in one hand and net in the other, his white pith hat at the back of his head.

"I say," he said loudly, between deep breaths, "those convicts have got the *Typee* and are making off as hard as they can go. There was a fight; I saw it through my glasses; they chucked three of the crew overboard and tied up the rest. They're off now before a perfectly good sailing wind, and don't look as if they mean coming back."

3

Horror and amazement swept the congregation, as a wind sweeps a forest. For a moment tense silence held them; one heard only the monkeys, the birds, the tumbling, splitting nuts. Then a shrill cry tore the noon in two.

"Lord! Lord! Hae ye desairted us after all?"

The old woman's cry broke the spell. With a loud, sibilant gasp, the congregation sprang to its feet.

"Come on," cried Captain Paul, and dashed off through the trees. Every one followed, rushing shoreward as a startled herd of wild pigs dash through a wood. Old Jean, sobbing harshly and bent low over her stick, hobbled in the rear.

Behind her the four black men marched, swinging Miss Smith in her palanquin. Between the palm curtains the old face appeared, the fierce blue eyes blinked.

They crowded to the lagoon's edge. Far out, they saw the *Typee* running full-sail before an easterly wind, bounding over a swelling sea. The two island boats were being rowed out to sea, each by a solitary oarsman.

"You see," said William, "at first I thought it was all right, they were just going for a sail and coming back. Then when they'd got a little way, the row began. The convicts suddenly went for the crew, and chucked three of them over the side. I put my glasses up then, and saw the rest of the dagoes knocked out and tied up. So now, if those chaps know how to work a ship, they've got right away with her, whatever their game is."

"Damn," said Captain Paul, raking the schooner with William's glasses. "Damnation."

It seemed, at that moment, about all he had to say.

Mr. Albert Smith, however, had more.

"What," he demanded loudly, "is the meaning of this? How did it happen that the convicts were allowed to escape? How do the warders come to be out in the boats?"

"A plan of mamma's," Denis uneasily explained. "Little Birthday treat for the convicts. They were to row out to the ship and be brought back while we were all at church. Damn silly plan; see it now, of course; damn silly. . . . What are those chaps doing out there? Oh, looking for the poor fellows they threw overboard, I suppose. No chance, I'm afraid; too many sharks about. . . . Ought to have known it was a damn silly game."

"Certainly you ought," his brother said. "And I fail to see why I was not consulted in the matter. Well, your folly—I can only suppose you were drunk when you agreed to this insane plan—has ended in a disaster we cannot yet measure. It is tolerably obvious that, having murdered three sailors, and stolen a ship, these men won't feel much inclined, even if they succeed in navigating the ship so as to arrive anywhere, to mention their action or our whereabouts."

"Marooned," said Mr. Merton forcibly. "Bloody well marooned. Christ!"

"No foul language, sir, if you please," said a sharp voice from the palanquin. "I must ask you to remember in whose presence you are—if your *Creator's* presence is not sufficient to restrain you."

"Restrain be damned," said Mr. Merton rudely. "You old fool, it's all your fault it happened. Letting your bloody convicts loose like that. . . ."

"Oh, shut up, Merton. Rowing won't help," said Charles.

"Enough, sir," said Albert Edward, more sternly. "You forget yourself. No one can deny the folly of

this scheme so unfortunately conceived and executed, but that is no reason for insulting Miss Smith in her age and infirmity."

"Oh, indeed," came from the palanquin. "*Folly*, you said, Bertie, did you? Folly indeed! I'd have you know it was no such thing." She pushed the palm curtains back, and looked out on the crowd, purple with pride and noon heat, breathing heavily, shaking her head from side to side.

"Wits failing from age, I dare say you all think. No such thing! What we did, we did with our eyes open. It was our Birthday treat to the convicts—their liberty. And our Birthday treat to you, you poor fools, was to make sure you stayed safe on the island, instead of going out into the wicked world to lose your souls and bodies. We gave the convicts their orders ourself. Told 'em they'd be shut up in England if they waited to be brought there as convicts, and that this was their chance, and they were to take it. Another thing we told 'em—that if ever it came out what they'd done they'd certainly be put to death, so you may be sure they'll keep mum about us. No hope of rescue from *them*. Oh, we managed 'em! You don't suppose, you poor fools, we were going to let you leave your homes and gallivant about the world? Not a bit of it. We care for our people too much for that, we hope. Who are *you* to start complaining of the good land the Lord has provided for you to live in and want to go trapesing into strange countries? You, whom we picked out of the gutter! No; here you'll live and die, be sure of that. So will you, Bertie, who thought you were going to be so great in England. And as to you, Thinkwell, you won't see that ship of yours again—nor any other ship neither. Here you are and here you'll stay, and make your home with us.

Serve you right, you rascal. It's a judgment. You're marooned, Thinkwell, just as you marooned us all those years ago. Marooned; that's what you are. . . ."

Her voice had risen higher and louder, and the last words were a shrill cry, as she bent forward and shook her bamboo stick towards Mr. Thinkwell.

A murmur swelled to a growl among the population. But, before any had time to speak, old Jean stepped forward, leaning on her stick, lifting one arm prophetically above her head for silence. It was as if the storm of passion and despair which shook her had broken at last the dams which had held for half a century of hate.

"And noo, friends, wull ye listen tae *me* a bit while, for I hae something tae tell ye. Ye'll be surprised tae hear it, I mak nae doot. . . . Na, na, Miss Smith, I wunna whisht—I hae held my whisht ower long, and this day the Lord has put His judgment into my hands. Listen, all of ye. Miss Smith, wha's ever been sae stairn anent marriage, and bastards, and the like, makin' all these bastardy laws, and what not—Miss Smith was ne'er the honest wife o' the doctor. For why, the mon had a wife already, ower in Ireland—though I'll do Miss Smith the justice tae say she didna ken it when she took him. So her marriage was nae marriage ava, but plain adultery, e'en though 'twas committed in ignorance, and her bairns were all born in sin—ay, every ane o' them, bastards all. Ay, Bairtie Smith, standin' there sae prood and gran', ye're nought but a puir bastard, and by ye're ain laws ye've nae right tae be hauldin' a foot o' land or to be takkin' any pairt in the government o' this island—this cairsed island desairted by the Lord. And noo I hae said my say, and I'll whisht gin ye like. Ay, Miss Smith, sittin' there in ye're sins and ye're pride, ye may weel rage

and storm, but ye canna deny the truth, rage ye ne'er sae fierce. Ye're nought but an adultering wumman, when all's said. The Lord who has desairted an' rejected us be yere judge for this last wickedness, ye ill wumman!"

She broke off, overcome, and sank on the sands.

But no one observed her; it was now on Miss Smith that all eyes were turned. The old lady's face staring furiously at Jean, had become a violent purple, the swollen veins standing out like cords. Her lips worked, but no sound emerged; she grasped and shook her stick at Jean, at her people, at heaven, till it fell suddenly from her hand, and she seemed to collapse, with a loud and stertorous groan.

In brief, Miss Smith appeared to have had a stroke.

Albert Edward and Mrs. Smith-Carter were at her side, and Mrs. Smith-Carter called for her son-in-law, the doctor, who hurried up, looking efficient and commanding that those present should stand back in order that Miss Smith might "have air."

"She must be taken home," he said, and called "Nurse!"

Nurse, a buxom and cheerful looking lady, came forward, all readiness, and the Zacharies picked up the palanquin and started for Balmoral, followed by Mrs. Smith-Carter and another Smith daughter.

Albert Edward remained on the beach. He had something to say. He cleared his throat, firmly grasped his whiskers, and said loudly and clearly, "Jean, your wild talk has, I fear, reduced Miss Smith" (his was the only obeisance to the name) "to a very serious and dangerous state of health. She was already, as you all observed, affected by the heat, and by the great disaster of the loss of the schooner, so that she talked fancifully" (this he said very firmly

and clearly) "about her own share in that disaster. You saw fit to add to her distress by wild and unfounded accusations, in the very worst of taste, which must have hurt and distressed her very deeply. Your only excuse is your own great age, which makes you, no doubt, entirely irresponsible for your utterances."

"Prood words, Bairtie Smith," the old voice quavered up shrilly from the sands, where Jean sat huddled and shrunk, staring out to sea. "Prood words ye hae, as always. But ye dinna believe them yersel'. Let any what doots me, look in that journal; tairn tae the year 1870, and see if the entries there, gin ye understand them, dinna bear me oot. Oh, she was cunnin', and thought nane but auld Jean wad e'er lairn the truth; so she talked proodly of 'bastards' and 'livin' in sin,' puttin' up a screen between hersel' an' her ain saul. An' her secret wad hae been safe tae the end but for this wickedness. She suldna hae driven auld Jean tae vengeance. Ay, ay, blather hoo ye like, Bairtie Smith, there's nane here that'll believe ye, so ye may's weel spare yere breath. Ye're naught but a bastard bairn, an' all here ken it verra weel. . . . But what does any of it matter the noo? Oh, Lord, ye hae visited us sairly with Thy judgments this day!" She fell to wailing, her head in her withered hands.

"Come, come," said Mr. Thinkwell, stooping over her and patting her kindly on the shoulder. "Come, come, come. Don't give way. There is no reason to suppose that all is lost, or that we shan't be rescued in time. Surely some of these convicts have left families behind them here, whom they would scarcely wish to abandon for ever."

"That's true," said some one. "Not that they would all trouble about their familes; but there are some who might. Michael Conolly, for instance."

"You're right there," cried Mrs. Michael Conolly. "If Michael ever gets to safety, he'll send help, even if it does put him in danger again himself. Trust Michael!"

"And what about the crew?" suggested Denis Smith. "The ones they didn't chuck overboard. They'll tell."

"The odds are," said Mr. Merton gloomily, "the crew will all be chucked overboard before they arrive anywhere. Can't put much money on *them,* poor devils. Besides, without chart or direction, who's to find the way here? Paul brought the log with him ashore. It's a thousand to one they'd never find us, even if they sent a search party. Might take 'em years, anyhow, and they'll get tired of looking before that."

"If they try to work the schooner themselves," said Captain Paul, "they'll probably come to grief and run her on a reef, or let her capsize in the first squall."

"If they are sensible," said Mr. Thinkwell, "they will make the crew navigate her. That is, no doubt, what they kept some of them for. Well, it's no use speculating. We can do nothing but wait and see how it turns out. . . . Those poor fellows out there don't seem to have been found."

"Sea's alive with sharks," said Mr. Merton.

The two boats were being rowed into the lagoon. The population watched them gloomily. Mr. Albert Smith was talking continuously and loudly, but no one listened much.

"No one will ever listen to papa again," Flora muttered. "He's like a paradise bird whose tail has been cut off. Bastards! I must say that's rather amusing. The one bright spot in this horrid business."

Charles, who was standing by her, said "No. There's another bright spot—anyhow for me. You and I are staying here together."

She turned on him, with angry eyes.

"Oh, that's a bright spot, is it? I hate you, Charles Thinkwell. I don't want to speak to you. You and your absurd ship that hasn't rescued us after all. My life is spoilt, and you say it's a bright spot that we're here together. I can tell you, you won't find it so. Because I was pleased to hear you tell me about England, and so on, I suppose you think I'm in love with you. Well, I'm not, so there. Now that we're left stranded on this abominable island—perhaps for years, perhaps for ever, who knows?—I don't want you in the least. I wanted you to show me England. I hate your chatter about things I shall never see."

"Very good," said Charles, white about the lips and nostrils. "I quite understand. You needn't be afraid I shall bore you any more."

He turned his back on her and walked away.

"Peter," said Flora. Her proud, gay mouth was quivering, her eyes held tears. *"Peter."*

He was at her side.

"Peter—I can't bear it. Take me away in a boat, and let's get somewhere or drown. I can't *endure* to stay on here and never see the world after all."

"They'll come for us," Peter consoled her. "My papa won't desert us, I know that. Not unless they are lost themselves."

"They will be," Flora cried. "I know it. The first squall—didn't you hear Captain Paul say it? Oh, Peter, how *could* your papa?"

"I suppose he thought it was his only chance of freedom," said Peter moodily. "He was a prisoner for life."

"Serve him right," said Flora. Then, "Oh, Peter, I don't mean it; don't be cross. If he gets help sent to us, I shall forgive him a hundred times. But only

imagine it—perhaps years and years more of this tedious place! I am sure I shall die of it quite soon."

The boats landed with the two warders, and every one crowded about them as they told their tale.

"I am sure," said one of them, "I thought there were enough on board to keep them in order should they get troublesome. But indeed, we never thought of such a notion. So quiet they seemed, and coming away so pleased last night after their audience with Miss Smith —ungrateful fellows. Who'd have dreamed of such a thing?"

Mr. Albert Smith looked uneasy lest some one should mention what indeed the warders were bound to learn soon enough, the part played by Miss Smith in the day's proceedings. He talked quickly of the poor brown sailors who had been thrown into the sea.

Mr. Albert Smith was a shaken man.

4

Slowly the crowd dispersed. It was of no use to stay on the shore any longer, watching for a schooner now far away out of sight. They strolled off in groups and knots, discussing the day's strange occurrences. Many were discontented, angry, rebellious; others thought they were, but were really relieved not to have to make this disturbing move and leave their home for ever behind them. But on all the Smith yoke lay, galling and precariously balanced; why should they stand it any more? That was the burden of their talk. Miss Smith had betrayed them, and was now fallen into a state that seemed a judgment. Her children, who had annexed the island, had, it seemed, no right to a foot of it, for they were bastards, and, as such, condemned by their own laws. . . .

Why should they stand it any longer?

They would not stand it any longer.

Newspapers came out on the Hibernian shore, saying that they would not.

"Up, Orphans, and take the island from these so-called Smiths!"

"Why so-called?" inquired Mr. Thinkwell, reading this as it came out. "They *are* Smiths. To-day, in fact, we learn for the first time that Smith is (according to Jean Fraser anyhow) their correct name. Though, as to that, the point raised by Jean as to their illegitimacy is debatable. It raises, in fact, a not uninteresting legal question as to the marriage laws on desert islands."

Charles, who was sulkily reading the news with him, reminded him that so-called was, in Great Britain, often used merely as a term indicative of distaste and contempt. Sometimes during the European War people had even, when roused, spoken of our foes as "these so-called Germans."

"Very true," Mr. Thinkwell agreed. "Obviously, here, as there, people will say anything."

They perused further revolutionary utterances.

"It certainly looks," said the languid voice of Hindley Smith-Rimski, "as if our respected family hadn't a much longer run here. What do you think, Mr. Thinkwell?"

"I certainly think it would be wise to make considerable changes in the constitution and the property laws. The time seems to have come when this is positively demanded."

"It may be demanded, but it won't be granted, I imagine. The only change in the laws I anticipate is the repeal of the bastardy laws. But I dare say we shan't even have that, as at present my Uncle Bertie's line is to maintain that grandmamma's—er

—adultery (if you will pardon the crude word) is a delirious and senile fancy of old Jean's."

"It is an awkward position for him," said Mr. Thinkwell, who saw every one's point of view.

"It is. And it may very soon be a confoundedly awkward position for us all. See there!"

In large capitals was being written, "THE NAME OF THIS ISLAND IS HEREBY CHANGED FROM SMITH ISLAND TO ORPHAN ISLAND."

Hindley shrugged his slim shoulders. "The Orphans mean business, I fear. In their present mood, and if they work themselves up much more and spend a fairly bibulous afternoon, they should be up to anything by the evening. Odd, how excited they get."

His glance at the population, calm, quizzical, amused, was such as a French aristocrat might have turned on the *canaille* on the eve of the Revolution.

"It will be more amusing than this," he said, "this evening, when the official journal comes out. It will need such very earnest and vigilant censoring on the part of poor Uncle Bertie. I shall be interested to see in what form he does let the day's news appear. Let us leave this rather noisy peninsula. . . . Well, Mr. Charles, how does the prospect of settling down for some time among us please you? You look a little melancholy, if I may say so."

"Naturally," said Charles, "I want to get home. I have a great many things to do there. . . . Not that I expect we shall be held up here for long, but still, it's a bore. I've been talking to Paul about the chances of getting anywhere in a boat, but he doesn't think much of them. He says you couldn't provision a small boat for long enough, even if it wouldn't be swamped. But I can't see why it is impossible to build a much larger boat, that would be seaworthy."

Hindley shook his head.

"All our attempts at that have so far failed—and we've tried, at intervals, for sixty-eight years, you must remember. We haven't the materials. We can build houses, of a sort, but not ships."

"The experience of all castaways as to that seems to have been much the same," Mr. Thinkwell agreed. "Even Crusoe, a man full of resource and perseverance, though stupid in many ways, failed to build a boat in which he could voyage far. We have to make about two hundred miles, across a sea noted for its sudden and violent storms. But I certainly feel we should give our minds to the problem. It would seem a pity merely to sit idle, waiting for rescue."

"Meanwhile," said Hindley, "and pending both the construction of this vessel and the Orphan revolt, let us dine while we may. Perhaps you will both honour me? We will talk of literature and the arts, and forget the troublous world awhile."

5

The banquet had been, of course, given up, on account of Miss Smith's indisposition, which remained unchanged. Loyalty would have demanded a respectful quiet on this her Birthday evening, while she lay ill. The fact that there was no respectful quiet seemed to the Smith family ominous. There was defiant noise, shouting, public speaking. Some assisted in the making of noise because they were annoyed, some because they were relieved, others because they liked noise.

Mr. Albert Smith stayed in Balmoral, after a painful half-hour spent in superintending the issue of the evening news on the shore. He had failed to censor the news as he thought fit; for the first time the news editor took no notice of him, but, supported by public opinion,

went his own way, and Mr. Smith had the vexation of reading in full the story of the convicts and his mamma, and that of his mamma's alleged illicit union with his papa. Nothing he could say, not all his loud commands and imperious gestures, had sufficed to stop or ameliorate this news. When he said "Erase, please," the editor had said, in effect, "Stet," and no one had come forward to obey the Prime Minister's command. There was even a paragraph about the bastardy of the Smiths of the second generation, and how this might affect their position in the state. This paragraph Mr. Smith had, stepping forward, erased with his own foot, but not before great numbers had read it. When it came to the paragraph headed "Health of Miss Smith," all that was said was "Miss Smith has had a fit, and is no better." No anxiety or regret was expressed. Mr. Smith heard even his brother-in-law, Mr. Carter, mutter, "Serve her right, too, the old devil." Mr. Carter had never got on over well with his mother-in-law, who had kept him in his place as merely the consort of Adelaide Smith. Only some of the Orphan women, incurably loyal, said, "Poor old lady! I hope she'll get better. She *is* Miss Smith, when all's said, and she acted for our good, after all." (For they did not by any means all desire to leave the island.)

It was all very unpleasant. There was nothing for it but to retire to Balmoral and hold a family conclave outside the sick room. Dr. Field and the nurse bustled in and out, letting Miss Smith's blood, applying cold compresses to her head, saying, "A severe fit. She is conscious but helpless, and may remain so indefinitely. There is no reason to apprehend immediate death. In these cases, no one knows what will happen."

The family tiptoed about the bed, talking in whispers.

Miss Smith lay, purple and rigid, breathing heavily, with wide open eyes. If she was conscious, if she was enraged, if she was struggling to say "Don't whisper, Bertie; it annoys us; we've told you before," she failed to indicate it. She merely lay and breathed.

Anticipating no immediate change in her condition, Mr. Albert Smith went back to the Yams for supper. At the Yams sat Mrs. Albert Smith sewing at a frock for an infant grandchild, saying at intervals, "Tut, tut. To think of your mamma doing such a thing! Well, I never!" which was not helpful, whether it referred to Miss Smith's exploit with regard to the *Typee* or to her earlier behaviour with the doctor.

Flora came in, sullen and defiant, and Heathcliff, excited and flushed. Heathcliff, during supper, remarked that the island was in a great state of discontent, and that, so far as he could see, the only way to avert a rising which would overthrow the government was for parliament to meet to-morrow and radically reform the constitution itself, redistributing both land and power among the many.

"Don't talk nonsense, my dear boy," his papa told him. "We Smiths are not the sort to betray our trust through fear. And at the moment, too, when your grandmamma lies helpless. . . ."

Flora, rousing from a sullen reverie, said that, for her part, she did not care in the least what happened to the constitution or the land, to the Orphans or to the Smiths, but that she supposed her papa would no longer raise objections to her marrying Peter Conolly on the grounds that he was a bastard.

Her papa said that he certainly could and did.

"Well," said Flora spitefully, "in that case, and if marriages of *that* kind are wrong, I think you ought to undo your marriage with mamma."

"Flora, be silent. I desire you to be silent immediately. I should have thought, I must say, that you would have known better than to use, in order to wound and insult me, the irresponsible libel of a demented old woman. To say the least of it, that appears to me to be hardly cricket. Particularly with your grandmamma lying helpless and unable to defend herself."

Flora shrugged a shoulder, possibly a trifle ashamed.

"Well, in any case," she said, "Angus says he will marry us. He says he doesn't see why he shouldn't. We talked to him about it this afternoon. Oh, dear me, papa, surely if we have to spend months and years more on this tedious island, we must pass the time as best we can!"

Her voice broke on a sob. The prospect of marrying Peter, though it might alleviate the island's tedium, could not compensate Flora for losing the world.

"Oh, tut, my dear, tut," her mamma soothed her. "We mustn't be peevish, you know. I shall have to talk to you like little Harriet's mamma in the poem—I'm sure I used to be always saying it to you when you were little:—

"These slight disappointments are sent to prepare
For what may hereafter befall;
For seasons of *real* disappointment and care,
Which commonly happen to all.

"For, just like to-day with its holiday lost,
Is life and its comforts at best:
Our pleasures are blighted, our purposes crossed,
To teach us it is not our rest.

"And when those distresses and crosses appear
With which you may shortly be tried,
You'll wonder that ever you wasted a tear . . ."

"Oh, mamma, *do* be quiet!"

Heathcliff got up and went to the door.

"They are very noisy," he said, listening. "There are a lot of them coming this way. I expect they are going to hold a meeting outside the Yams—a demonstration. They'll probably call for you, papa. They half suspect, you know, that *you* had something to do with grandmamma's performance this morning—knew of it anyhow. I told them you didn't."

"I? Indeed, no. It is your Uncle Denis they should blame for that, not me."

"They do blame Uncle Denis, for being a fool, and probably tipsy. But they don't suspect him of knowing of grandmamma's plot. Uncle Denis is pretty popular, you see, on the whole, so far as any Smith can be. It's you they seem so down on—after grandmamma, who's out of action now. . . . Anyhow they're coming this way. Listen!"

There were confused noises without.

"I shall not," said Mr. Smith, squaring his shoulders and throwing out his chest, "take the slightest notice."

6

All the evening and far into the night the noise of demonstration rolled. Hindley Smith-Rimski, playing chess with Mr. Thinkwell at Belle Vue, heard it, and said, "The populace appear to clamour for my family's blood. I can't say I'm surprised. Where are your offspring?"

Mr. Thinkwell looked vaguely round the room.

"They seem to be all out. I suppose, like Paul and Merton, they are watching the evening's doings. I can't say, myself, that mere demonstrations of excitement interest me greatly. Persons carried away by feeling are, as a rule, at their least interesting."

"Besides," said Hindley, "being in deucedly bad form. Knight takes your rook. . . . I suppose your daughter will be all right?"

"I imagine so," said Mr. Thinkwell. "She is no doubt with her brothers."

7

As a matter of fact, Rosamond was not with her brothers, for William was on the shore pursuing the zoölogical investigations which the misconduct of the convicts had abruptly interrupted in the morning, and Charles had walked up into the hills. Rosamond was with Captain Paul, who, tucking her hand firmly into his arm, was taking care of her, as they strolled about listening to the conversations, demonstrations, and music. Rosamond had no great inclination to be taken care of, and would have preferred solitude, but Captain Paul thought that unsafe for young females on such a night as this.

"Might meet with unpleasantness," he said.

Meet with unpleasantness! Rosamond thought that would be dreadful. It sounded so sinister, unpleasantness in the abstract, a creature stalking along the roads, that one might meet at any turning face to face. One would run for one's life, but Unpleasantness would run faster, hurrying in a horrid lumbering gallop. . . . No, one must not meet Unpleasantness. So Rosamond submitted to having her hand tucked into Captain Paul's arm, and to being escorted about her own island.

She could not help feeling a little happy to-day, deep in her soul, despite the disaster that had befallen them all, and that had so vexed some of the islanders, and, in particular, her dear Flora. Of course it *was* very vexing for them, to lose their Promised Land at a blow, like this. Vexing, too, for her father, who had his

work in Cambridge, to which he was so oddly attached. One might not be able to understand how any one could prefer work in Cambridge to idleness on a coral island, but still, fathers are odd, and there it was. Rosamond was not so selfish as to desire her father to be permanently marooned and the islanders permanently disappointed, but, as this would appear to have occurred, for herself she could not but feel rather pleased, though the thought of her dog Peter somewhat distressed her.

"Some kind of sufficiently navigable craft *might* be built, possibly," Captain Paul speculated aloud to himself. "Though the Lord alone knows how. . . ."

Rosamond reflected that the Lord's alone knowing would not help them very much. In her view, it could not be done. No one on desert islands ever escaped from them in boats—not even in real boats saved from the ship. Even Masterman Ready (who was so clever that he could build houses, stockades, turtle traps, anything, for poor, stupid Mr. Seagrave, who could not help him at all), had known that he could not hope to do that. Even Jack, Ralph, and Peterkin, who had made a wonderful boat of chestnut planks, with nothing but an axe, had only used it to voyage round the island, and, on the one occasion when they went further, had been very nearly wrecked in a storm. Even Robinson Crusoe, so busy, persevering, and helped by Providence, had failed here. No; obviously it could not be done. Elsewhere one built ships, but not on desert islands. One waited for ships instead, and, if ships did not come, one went on waiting.

"I expect," said Rosamond, "we shall have to wait to be rescued."

CHAPTER XXII

CHARLES

I

CHARLES climbed above the crowds, up the steep wood path, beneath dense spreading boughs that hid him from the moon. He was shut in warm, scented darkness, with sleeping birds, huddled ball-shaped, heads under wings, who loaded the branches like coloured fruits, with monkeys who woke and chattered at his step, with armadillos who rattled like corn-crakes, fireflies who sparked like flames in a rick, tortoises who cried of love. Feathery boughs of pepper trees struck him softly across the face; pollen from brushed flowers dusted him and made him sneeze, and all the perfumes of the forest assailed him on small warm wandering winds, which bore no comfort on their wings.

He climbed above the woods, and on the hill's rocky brow met the moon. It stared low from a purple sky, with millions of enormous stars, drenching the island and the sea with pale gold.

Dreams, dreams, dreams! The perfumed island was a dream, afloat in a vast and shining ocean. Only the golden moon and the myriad stars burned on, imperishable lamps of truth. Beauty was a dream, that flashed across one's path, brilliant bird of paradise, and vanished in confusion and bitterness. Beauty fled; one woke on a cold hillside, alone and palely loitering. Dreams, dreams, dreams!

From the shores below confused sounds came up, as of an island in uproar.

"Noise doesn't help," said Charles, and turned his back on the climbing moon and plunged down the hill's other side, into the shallow, shadowed valley where the sedgy lake lay in gloom beneath hanging thickets.

By the lake's edge Charles lay. The golden stars were caught in green, weedy scum, floating there with sleeping water-birds and a thousand crawling insects.

"Very Baudelairien," muttered Charles.

From the green stagnant water mist steamed, drifting about him in cold wreaths. He shivered as if he had ague.

The sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing. . . .

Dreams, dreams, dreams!

He was drenched in sweat, from his climb through the hot, dark wood. The mist drifted about him chilling him. He plucked berries from a shrub at his side, and chewed them; they were bitter and numbing to the tongue. Perhaps they would also numb the soul. . . .

He was cold; he was hot; he was sick. The itch nettle spurted over him its milky juice. The moon reached him, looking over the hill, sending down long silver arms to embrace him where he lay in shadow, as if he had been Endymion. He *was* Endymion. As Endymion dreamed of the moon's kiss, so he. Both woke.

She had kissed him, his lovely moon. She had let him kiss her on the mouth, on that proud, gay, cruel mouth.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew,
And sure in language strange she said,
I love thee true.

Dreams, dreams, dreams!

A mocking bird woke and uttered his odd, shrill cry. Centipedes crawled over the white sprawled figure by the water's brink. The climbing moon stood straight above the valley pool, staring whitely down on it, turning its green, mist-smudged surface to dull, iridescent silver.

"Very Mallarméan," said Charles hoarsely.

The moon set. Only the blinking stars lit the world. In the dark, still hour before dawn, forest life stirred; a bird trilled, a monkey spoke, a parokeet uttered one shrill complaint, two pigs answered each other through the night. Then silence fell again.

A small wind was born; it ran shivering about like a naked, crying child. It touched the sprawling figure among the dark shrubs, running cold fingers through his hair.

Charles moved, shivered, got slowly up. Starry darkness held the island. The marshy smell of stagnant water was in his nostrils; his throat was swollen, his lips and gums bitter and stiff. He ached, from his forehead down to his ankles, and his skin, where he touched it, or where flowers and herbs brushed it, was tender, as if he had fever.

He climbed over the hill's top; he stood there and looked at the Pacific, vastly dim in the starlight. The island was a ship, that heaved and rocked at anchor. He plunged dizzily down into black forest, and murmuring boughs blinded the stars. Big crabs dropped from trees about him, and a ripe nut thudded on his shoulder. It would be dawn in a few moments. Everywhere the birds and beasts announced it in their different modes.

It was dawn when he came to the wood's edge.

Morning glimmered on the Pacific, struggling with the dying stars.

A hundred birds unballed themselves and sang; a hundred monkeys cried. Only man slept now; only Smiths and Orphans, wearied with the revelings of the Birthday night of Miss Smith.

"Very Rimbaudien," said Charles dizzily, and tumbled at the foot of a milk tree in a faint.

2

Every one was quieted down the day after the Birthday. They had got used to the disaster that had goaded them to revolt, to demonstration, to noise. After a day and a night spent in saying loudly what they thought of the affair, they woke with sore throats and practical purposes. Parliament was going to meet, and things were going to happen there. The Prime Minister had been told so last night, by the deputation which had waited on him at the Yams.

Mr. Thinkwell stood beside Charles, who lay sick of a fever at Belle Vue, with a cold bandage about his head. The doctor had come to see him.

"A fever," the doctor said.

"Yes," said Mr. Thinkwell, who had a clinical thermometer, "his temperature is a hundred and four."

"If, as you say, he was out all night, it might account for it. Very unwholesome, sleeping out in the woods. He seems to have contracted a kind of ague. Also, I see from the state of his lips and gums that he has either eaten or chewed noxious berries of some kind. Some of these berries are very unwholesome, even poisonous. I am afraid he is suffering from a very serious chill."

"He is no better at diagnosis than doctors elsewhere,"

Mr. Thinkwell thought. "I could have said all that. Ague, poisonous berries, a chill. Which?"

"Keep him very warm," said the doctor; "except his head, which should be cool. I will send round a nurse presently, and some medicine. Meanwhile, I will let a little blood."

"Rather an old-fashioned remedy," said Mr. Thinkwell. "I should scarcely think it advisable."

"As you like, my dear sir, as you like. It is the cure for fever, you know, but as you like. Well, I must be getting back to my other patient. She remains just the same, poor old lady. She'll never get over it, I fancy, however long she lingers. Well, it's a pretty state of affairs, isn't it? Our servants wanting to be our masters."

Dr. Field, as the husband of a Smith-Carter daughter, felt one of the family. He viewed the Orphan unrest with disfavour.

"You must take care of this young gentleman," he said, as he went away. "I don't like his state; not at all."

"I know nothing about Charles's state that I did not know before he came," said Mr. Thinkwell, when he was gone. "I see that doctors are the same everywhere. They know uncommonly little."

"Yes," Rosamond agreed. She sat by Charles's bedside, damping his bandage when it grew warm. It was she who had found him, early in the morning, beneath the milk-tree.

Mr. Thinkwell stood looking down on his son.

"I have been asked to attend the meeting of parliament," he said. "And it would interest me to do so. The nurse will be here directly. If he gets worse you must come for me or send a message at once. You had better send William. Where is he? Down on

the shore, I suppose. Well, never mind. I imagine, from what I know of malarial types of fever, that he will go on much the same through the day. I shall be back, in any case, in a couple of hours."

He went out.

Rosamond sat by Charles. Every quarter of an hour she dipped the bandage round his head in cold water and replaced it. He tossed and turned, flushed and muttering, scarcely conscious. Through the long, wide, uncurtained window the sweet air of the island stole in, and the green forest light. Outside the window a large many-stemmed banian tree grew, giving shade with its thick foliage and edification with its stout trunks, each of which was inscribed with pious verse. One related the story of Ananias and Sapphira; from where she sat Rosamond could only see,—

"So did his wife Sapphira die,
When she came in and grew so bold
As to confirm that wicked lie
That just before her husband told.

"Then let me always watch my lips,
Lest I be struck to death and Hell,
Since God a book of reckoning keeps
For every lie that children tell."

On another stem the tale of Elisha and the mocking children must have been inscribed, for the stanza visible ran—

"God quickly stopped their wicked breath,
And sent two raging bears,
That tore them limb from limb to death,
With blood and groans and tears."

Between these two a third trunk struck a more cheerful note, moved, doubtless, to a natural thankfulness by these sad tales of the fate of Israelites:

"Lord, I ascribe it to Thy grace,
And not to chance, as others do,
That I was born of Christian race,
And not a Heathen or a Jew."

Charles picked at the cocoa-nut sheet with hot hands. He muttered with his lips. From time to time he ejaculated the name of Flora, or of a French poet.

Suddenly the quiet broke up, and there was a burst of noises. Noises seldom come singly. They arrive in battalions. The galloping of pigs in the wood, a sudden wind tearing at the trees, a breaking bough, the yelping of monkeys, the screaming of parokeets, the crying of a child. The world seemed all in a flurry. Then, as suddenly, it all died down; the world was drowsy again, and one heard only the small sounds, fruits that dropped with soft thumps, a gentle murmuring wind, bees humming over flowers, the sea that mourned against the reef and lapped with sleepy ripples on the shore.

With the quiet, came a small silver bird, like a pigeon. It flew in at the open window, and hovered over Charles's bed.

"It is the Holy Ghost," thought Rosamond, without surprise, and dipped Charles's bandage again.

The bird flew out at the window. Charles sat up in bed.

"Very Baudelairien," he exclaimed loudly, and fell back, muttering.

The nurse arrived. She was bright and strong and happy, and like a nurse.

"Now," she said, "I'll make you nice and comfortable."

Charles, who did not like nurses, and hated the word comfortable, scowled at her in his delirium. However, she moved cheerily about him, rearranged his head-bandage, dipping it into some fragrant lotion she had, felt his pulse, and told him how nice and comfortable he now was. She looked with interest at Mr. Thinkwell's clinical thermometer, which lay on a table by the bed.

"Doctor told me of it," she said. "But we must be ever so careful, of course, never to let the patient get hold of it himself, even when he gets better."

"Why not?" asked Rosamond. "It's rather amusing, taking one's temperature; it's something to do in bed."

"My dear! That would never do. Doctor would be sadly shocked. We never let them know how they are."

"Don't you? Why not?"

"Oh, it wouldn't do at all; it would throw them back. I never tell my patients what their pulse is, for example."

Rosamond believed that she never did. "Very nice" would probably be the extent of the information she would transmit on the subject.

"Now, my dear," said the nurse, cheery and kind, "you must run out and have some fresh air. I'll take care of him, never fear. Don't you worry, my dear, everything will be quite all right, and you needn't be one bit anxious."

"I'm not," said Rosamond.

3

She went down to the lagoon to wade. On the way she met a lady with a sweet, spiritual face and a wonderful smile, who stopped and addressed her on the subject of Charles.

"I wish," she said, "that you would let me heal him. He doesn't require doctors and nurses, it's all so simple really—just a question of faith. If you would let me treat him. . . ."

She smiled beautifully, and Rosamond saw that her smile was of the no-evil type, Christian Science or Faith Healing, she was not sure which; there were both in Cambridge.

"Thanks very much," she said. "But perhaps you had better ask my father about it."

"Gentlemen," said the healer, "aren't always very easy to convince, are they? Rather obstinate and bigoted sometimes."

Rosamond agreed that gentlemen were often like that.

"A little faith," continued the lady, "is worth a hundred doctors. My treatment consists in letting loose the powers of good, till they flow about the patient, healing him. It's all so simple!"

"Well," said Rosamond, "you might speak to the nurse about it. She's in there now."

"Oh, the nurse. Nurses aren't always very open-minded, are they? Rather bigoted."

Rosamond agreed that nurses were probably like that.

"Well, at least I will try treatment from a distance on him, until I can see him. One can let loose the powers even from a distance—but not *so* loose. . . .

I will speak to Mr. Thinkwell about it. Any one on the island can tell you of marvellous healings I have performed. Not *really* marvellous in the least, of course—it's all so simple, if one believes in the Lord of health. You see, don't you, that the Lord must *will* good health to His children. He must hate illness and pain, mustn't He? It's His nature to."

Rosamond agreed that the Lord must probably be like that.

Then, seeing no likelihood that the conversation would end unless she ended it, she said "Good-bye," and went down to the lagoon.

William was there, hanging over his favourite pool with his net.

"Hallo," he said. "Charles getting on all right?"

"I think so. A nurse has come. And a faith healer is giving him absent treatment."

"What on earth's that? . . . Oh, well, I suppose he'll be all right, soon, won't he. Rotten luck though. . . . I say, these people seem rather excited still. They've all gone off to parliament now, to make demonstrations there. They seem to mean to change the government or something. More fools they, not to have changed it years ago, if they didn't like it. . . . By the way, the weather experts say there's a first-rate storm coming along: see that purple over there?"

Rosamond saw it: a banked mass in the far south, slowly moving.

"That'll probably do for those convicts and the *Typee*," said William. "That is, if they're navigating her themselves. . . . I shouldn't wonder if we're stuck here for some time. I shan't mind, shall you? There's lots to do here, and I rather like it. My aquarium needs a lot more creatures in it still." He scooped up

a netful of green sargassum, and in it there plunged an infant fish with a big head, but, while being transferred to a tin basin, it leaped into the open lagoon and fled.

"Another perfectly good young filefish gone," said William resignedly. "The last died of grief. I must find another."

Rosamond joined him at his marine sport.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE COUP D'ÉTAT

I

PARLIAMENT had a stormy meeting that morning. Respectable Smith M.P.'s were pushed aside by a vociferous crowd of Orphans, who rushed the House, shouting cheerfully for the resignation of the Prime Minister and the Government, and for an immediate dissolution. They even shouted, rudely and continually, "We don't want Smiths!" until the Prime Minister, with grave dignity, addressed to them, at last and with difficulty making himself heard, an inquiry as to whom, then, if they dispensed with Smiths, *did* they deem fit for the government of the island? A loud shout of "Orphans!" answered him, but, more particularly than that, they specified no one.

It was obviously of little use to continue the proceedings of the House, as the Speaker had no control over this irruption and the police did not appear to be functioning to-day, so the Speaker before long arose and went, followed by the government and the members, leaving the intrusive Orphans in possession of the floor.

"Very Cromwellian proceedings," Mr. Thinkwell commented. He himself remained in the House, interested in watching a political revolution at work.

There was a good deal of speaking, of a more or less irrelevant but consistently anti-Smith tendency, and the question of the formation of the new government was discussed with energy, but unfruitfully. Jeal-

ousies, emulations, disagreements, and conflicting interests appeared to split the Orphans into factions. There was a good deal of heated argument as to who was to be the future Prime Minister. It became apparent that any Prime Minister would have a difficult time with the rival factions, and though many names were flung about, no agreement was reached, until suddenly some one shouted, "How about Mr. Thinkwell? He's from outside; he'd be fair; no one'd make objections to him."

The speaker was Dobbs the shoemaker, with whom Mr. Thinkwell had several times conversed over his work. His proposal was followed by a moment's pause; every one turned and looked at Mr. Thinkwell, where he sat on a bench by the door. Then the shoemaker's suggestion was acclaimed with a shout of approval, and Mr. Thinkwell had the experience, familiar to him hitherto only after feasts at his own college, when his health had sometimes been drunk, of hearing his name called in unison and with approbation by a considerable number of persons.

"Dear me!" he said, by way of comment. "Dear me!"

He was surrounded by a friendly crowd all clamouring to him. He had had no idea that he was so popular on the island, as was, apparently, the case.

The shoemaker addressed him.

"What do you say, sir? Since you're to stay on with us here, why not take on the government? We can promise you loyal support. You know how the countries of the world are governed to-day, and you can help us to frame our constitution and laws on European models."

"Heaven forbid!" said Mr. Thinkwell.

"Anyhow, sir, you're apart from our quarrels and

parties, and would have a support no other man would have, so long as you act just and right by us. Come, sir, will you take it on?"

"Really," said Mr. Thinkwell, "I don't know. I must think it over. It's a very sudden idea to me, and I can't reply off-hand. I will let you know to-morrow morning; that is, if you are still of the same mind."

"We shall be that, sir. A gentleman like yourself is just what we want as head. You think it over, and meanwhile we'll be appointing the rest of the government and framing up the new laws. We must tackle this land business first."

"Dear me. It all seems rather rapid and unconstitutional. But still, it's your own concern, of course."

Mr. Thinkwell left them to it, and thoughtfully walked away. Outside the House he met Denis Smith, strolling uneasily about, switching mangoes off the trees with his stick. When Mr. Thinkwell informed him of what had occurred, he slapped his thigh and rejoiced.

"The very thing," he said. "The Orphans won't be ruled by Smiths, and the Smiths won't be ruled by Orphans, but a government with you at the top—they'd both stand that. Gad, it's the very scheme. You'll be a drag on the hot-heads who want to go the whole hog, too. I must say the idea does the fellers credit, 'pon my soul it does. You may pull the old island through its troubles yet. Don't know what Bertie'll say to it, but he'd rather you took his place than an Orphan, anyhow. You won't say no, Thinkwell?"

"I don't know, really. It is a curious proposal, and I must think it over. I have never been a politician, you know; my work has been of a quite different

nature. Nor do I know anything of your constitution here."

"The less the better, I dare say, since it's to be overturned."

2

They parted outside Belle Vue, and Mr. Thinkwell went in to visit Charles, but did not stay long, as he found the nurse too conversational. He went out, paced up and down, and considered this new rôle which was offered him.

Politics! It was putting it mildly to say he had never been a politician; he had always disliked politicians excessively. But rather, of course, for what they, as a rule, were, than for their profession. The art of government need not necessarily be despicable; there had been good rulers occasionally in history. It was the system of parties of intrigue, of hypocritical acceptance of tenets not necessarily believed in, of struggling to gain or keep office, which made politics the ill-looking game they were in all countries. These things, and the third-rate intellects of most politicians, and the foolish and turgid eloquence they used in debate. . . . And the lies they told. . . . Mr. Thinkwell, reading on the banian trunk the tale of—

> "How Ananias was struck dead,
> Caught with a lie upon his tongue,"

reflected that politicians might count themselves uncommonly fortunate to be left, any of them, alive. To be in politics was obviously to be in a position of temptation against which most politicians were ill-equipped. Why did it involve greater temptation than a life of study or research? Perhaps because so much

of it consisted in trying to persuade one's fellow men of something or other of doubtful worth or veracity. One of those *human* jobs which are so demoralising. Acquiring influence over people. Deserting realms of pure fact and theory, realms in which only patient study and investigation availed one anything, for spheres in which one could score by trickery, or by the personal factor. A parliamentary debate was a disagreeable thing to read or hear. Silly; common; uneducated. Compare it with, for instance a discussion of the British Association, or of the Royal Geographical Society. . . . No; politics were not a pleasant business.

Still, that was the fault of politicians, of an absurd system. In a scientifically regulated world, that great desideratum, it was not unfitting that a sociologist should be Prime Minister. What an opportunity for fashioning affairs on sound theory. Decidedly, the idea had attraction. There would be a certain interest, while he remained here, in helping in the management of this odd island. A certain interest. Perhaps it would be well to accept. . . .

At this point his reflections were interrupted by the faith healer, who, stopping in front of him, turned on him the light of her smile and petitioned to be allowed to save his son Charles. Though she did her best to explain, and he to comprehend, it remained obscure to him throughout the interview and ever after what methods she proposed to adopt to this end, and the conversation closed with satisfaction to neither side.

After this perplexing interlude, Mr. Thinkwell resumed his meditations and his pacing, continuing so absorbed that he forgot his three o'clock meal.

"Well," he said at last, "I suppose I shall do it. I feel that I shall, however long I consider. Therefore

it would be foolish to waste any more time in considering. . . . How simple the problems of taking office must be to those politicians who feel it their duty to do so, as they mostly, in England, say they do. Now, I feel nothing of the sort, nor do I see why any one ever should. But I certainly feel that I shall do it, which comes to the same thing."

So reflecting, Mr. Thinkwell went into his house to see Charles, whom he found quieter, with abated fever.

3

William and Rosamond were driven up from the lagoon by a terrific burst of thunder and rain. The great black cloud had swept from the horizon till it stood over the island, and there it discharged its fury. Every one caught out in it was lashed, beaten, drenched to the skin, before they could reach shelter. The wind broke trees in two, rending off great branches, laden with cowering birds, from their stems; cocoa-nuts, fruit, and monkeys pelted like great hailstones on the ground. Thunder rolled and clapped; lightning struck five palm trees, a house, and several pigs. Monstrous waves swept over the reef and across the lagoon and thundered up the island and into the wood, breaking and carrying back to sea the boats on the shore and smashing a small house.

It was certainly a storm.

The Thinkwells, Captain Paul, Mr. Merton, and the nurse, sat in Belle Vue listening to it, barely making their voices heard above it. The nurse said it was the worst storm she remembered. Captain Paul said, gloomily, that it would be a miracle if the *Typee* came through it; he could scarcely have pulled her through himself.

"We shall hear no more of her," he said. "Serve

those damned scoundrels right. But there goes our one chance of rescue."

"Not necessarily," said Mr. Thinkwell. "Some of the crew may be picked up."

"Picked up by sharks," muttered Mr. Merton, who was in an ill humour, partly because there was not enough to drink in Belle Vue.

The nurse went back to Charles, who lay turning and moaning, his head disagreeably affected by the storm.

"There, there," said the nurse. "There, there, there."

"Where?" asked Charles, suddenly opening his eyes.

"Well, I declare," she said. "If you're not better! There, now!"

"Where?" asked Charles again, thinking she meant that Flora was there, or else a mad monkey with blue teeth.

But the nurse did not know where, and could not tell him.

CHAPTER XXIV

AFTER THE STORM

I

THE morning was windy and bright. Only a heaving sea and a wreck-strewn island showed that a storm had been. Pools of the sea lay about the emerald grass; smashed trees sprawled across the paths. Landowners ruefully surveyed their property, setting woodmen to gather up their strewn fruit and keep off marauders. Mr. Lane wandered downcast among his pigs, some of whom had been struck dead by lightning.

Rosamond wandered about the beaten woods, where children picked up the tumbled fruit and nuts. In the wet tangle of green, the birds were singing again, the aggrieved monkeys talking shrilly about the storm.

Rosamond met Flora.

"Good-morning, Rosamond. How is Charles? I heard he was sick of a fever."

"He is getting better." Rosamond hesitated. "He kept waking all night," the nurse had said, "and saying names I don't know. But most often Flora—that must be Miss Flora Smith. He is quieter now, the fever all gone; but I think it might cheer him up to see her just for a minute."

"I wish you would come and see him," said Rosamond. "He would like it."

"Why, of course, I will. I was cross with him, poor Charles, when last we spoke. I was furious with all the world, because of that detestable affair of the ship. I can't make out why some one doesn't murder grand-

mamma, fit or no fit. Wicked old woman! But it wasn't poor Charles's fault, and I think I was unkind. To be sure I will come, if you think he would care to see me."

They walked along the soaked path to Belle Vue. Rosamond took Flora in to where Charles lay, pale and exhausted, with dark, sunk eyes and swollen lips. When Flora entered, with "You poor Charles; are you better?" a violent flush rushed over his face and ebbed.

"Only a minute," said the nurse. "He must be kept ever so quiet. A teeny weeny little minute!"

She tiptoed from the room, and Rosamond followed.

"Poor Charles," said Flora again, standing by him. "You've had a bad time."

"Yes," said Charles huskily.

"You must get better quickly. . . . And, Charles, you must forgive me for being so ill-humoured to you. I was prodigiously shocked and unhappy, you know. I'm better now—settling down, I suppose. Though I am still wretched, and grandmamma I shall never, never forgive. But, after all, it is as bad for you as for us. That's what Peter said to me. . . ." She caught herself up.

"It was a shocking storm last night. Trees broken and houses crushed—you should have seen the sea. . . . Well, I mustn't stay, or nurse will say I've made you worse. Good-bye, Charles."

"Good-bye."

He stared hungrily at her as she stood there, backed by the window and the green wood light. She laid a cool hand lightly on his, and smiled kindly.

"You must get well quickly."

She was gone.

She had been kind, careless, and cool. She did not

love him; she had never loved him; her kisses had not meant that. She was beyond his reach.

Dreams, dreams, dreams!

Charles, not greatly caring about anything, shut his eyes as the nurse bustled in, lest she should speak to him.

2

Rosamond went out with Flora. In the wind-beaten wood, beneath the blue, washed sky, shyness fell upon her. She said, bluntly, "Charles loves you."

Flora glanced at her, doubtful how to reply, and slightly lifted a shoulder. The simple, obvious child.

"But you don't love him," Rosamond pursued, with something of her father's inclination to precise and accurate statement of a situation.

"Love him! Well, no. I like Charles. . . ."

"I think he hoped you would love him," said Rosamond, "some day. If you never will, perhaps it would be better not to let him think you may so that he won't be disappointed again. You love Peter Conolly, don't you?"

"What a catechism! But, since you will have it, yes, I love Peter."

Rosamond gave a little sigh.

"It's a pity," she said, "for Charles. But still, it can't be helped, of course. Only don't let Charles *think* things again. . . ."

"My dear, am I responsible for Charles's thoughts?"

"Yes," said Rosamond bluntly. "Partly."

"Oh, indeed. You fancy I led him on, perhaps? Well, let me tell you I didn't. There was no need. Charles did all his own chasing, without my help."

Chasing! Not a nice word. Rosamond coloured.

She stood there inarticulate, her power of language, never great, all ebbed. She was no match for Flora. . . .

"Well," she said, "that's all. Good-bye."

"Good-bye." Flora strolled away down the path. A few yards on she stopped, and called back over her shoulder, "If you like, and since you are so afraid of raising Charles's hopes of me, you can tell him that Peter and I are to be married next week. I must have Peter at once, to make up for losing the world. Not that he does make up, but still he's something. . . ."

Rosamond stood and looked after her retreating figure. Lovely she was, enchanting, disturbing, moving about common earth like a goddess, playing her juggler's games with the hearts of men. Lovely and disturbing and adorable—but was she hard? Was she common? Was she selfish? Did she love people for what they could give her? Charles had been going to give her life in the great world. Peter was to make up to her for the great world's loss. Rosamond could give her nothing, so Rosamond she merely tolerated.

Inarticulate, puzzled, unused to these reflections on human beings and their vagaries, Rosamond stopped to watch the little red crabs the sea had left scuttling bewildered about the grass.

Charles, who had fallen asleep, suddenly sat up straight, with wide, sunken eyes, remarked, "Life is very stale," and fell back.

"There, there," said the nurse, and made him nice and comfortable.

3

In the afternoon Miss Smith died. Helpless to the last, she never, by word or sign, after the minute of

mute violence on the beach, revealed her opinion of old Jean's accusation against her past propriety, never denied or admitted its truth. She went down inarticulate into darkness, her indomitable will undefeated, her arrogance unbroken, her authority snapped short abruptly at the hilt.

A respectful population followed while four black slaves carried her in her curtained palanquin up to the top of the hill and there buried her in the conspicuous grave demanded by her position, for Miss Smith of Smith Island was not to be given to the waste seas, like more ordinary corpses. She had a noble monument, a tall tree trunk set high on the hill's crest, and on it was carved:—

"Here Lie the Remains of Miss Smith, Ruler of Smith Island (now Orphan Island)"—this had been interpolated by the carver, uncommanded by his Smith employers—"for Sixty-eight Years Born September 1st, 1825. Died on her Birthday, 1923.
" 'The Price of a Good Woman is Above Rubies.'
—*Miss Smith.*"

(It had not been known on the island that this remark, one of Miss Smith's favourites, had not been originated by her but by Solomon, and when Mr. Thinkwell and Mr. Merton pointed it out, it was too late for alteration.)

Yes; the population, even the most revolutionary Orphans, were respectful enough to the Remains of Miss Smith. After all, she had always stood to them for destiny, for sovereignty, for the accepted order of things. And those who were unmoved by that felt that here was an old, old woman, who had been fuddled in her mind during her last years and not responsible

for her actions, which, after all, she had meant, perhaps, for the best.

And—who knew?—perhaps they had been for the best. Perhaps Miss Smith, however arbitrary in her methods, had been right in her decision. She had told her people that they would come to grief if they should leave the island, that the wider world held no place for them. Who knew, but that she had been right? Here, after all, they had a living; here was the land they knew, and, if its existing order should be changed and bettered, so that all had their fair share, it might be best to stay on it.

At any rate, destiny and Miss Smith had so decided.

But old Jean, mazed in her wits by age and grief, did not attend the funeral. She wandered up and down, to and fro, about the shore, peering always out to sea, and muttering, "A ship tae Aberrdeen. A wee ship tae Aberrdeen. Hoo lang, oh Lord, hoo lang?"

CHAPTER XXV

THE END OF IT

I

The island—Orphan Island now, by government proclamation—settled down. The newly-constituted parliament, under the thoughtful, just, and moderating guidance of Mr. Thinkwell, got to work on the emendation of the laws of the land and the readjustment of property. There were, after all, Smiths in the new Parliament, though not in a prominent position. At Mr. Thinkwell's suggestion, one of the first measures was the repeal of the bastardy laws, so that even the generation of Smiths who were under suspicion in this matter, were not ineligible for public position. But they were kept in their places. They formed in future the solid and stolid nucleus of that reactionary conservative party without which no parliament is complete. An eloquent minority, they sat on the opposition benches and voted consistently and ineffectively against the government. They had to listen to the passing of Acts by which their land was shorn to small plots close about their dwelling houses, their woods turned into common land, their game into the people's food. It was bitter; it was outrageous.

Outside parliament, they adopted the position of despoiled aristocrats. They might be robbed of land and power, but no one could rob them of caste. Class barriers in their eyes reared even more stiffly than before between them and the Lower Orders. Even

though they had, perforce, to live now much like these lower beings, they would never descend to their common level. Smiths were for ever Smith, Orphans for ever Orphan, and through all their fallen state the Smiths' social pride sustained them.

Their displeasure with Mr. Thinkwell, the interloping Premier who sanctioned and in part devised these changes was mitigated by the knowledge that, if he had not been there, they would have been far worse off than they were. For Mr. Thinkwell, to give him his due, was a fair man, a man who at least tried to be moderate and just.

That is to say, so far he has tried. But, since he has only been a politician for a year, it is to be feared that the deterioration almost inevitable in politicians may before long set in, and that his head may be turned and his eyes dazzled with power.

However that may be, he is interested in this new job. He finds it a good deal more interesting than his work at Cambridge. The government of this curious, this probably unique island, the development of its constitution and civilisation—here indeed is an absorbing problem for a man who has devoted his life to the study of sociology. Mr. Thinkwell is happy to be there, and desires no change. If a vessel should come now to the island, he might decline to depart in it; he would certainly advise the islanders in general to stay where they are. It was a mistake, he now sees, even more clearly than before, to plan their removal; the plan, he consoles himself by reflecting, was never his, but the memory of having at least played with it, still irks him. It is, of course, as an island republic that their development should proceed. Being a just man, he would never, should opportunity arise, play them the trick Miss Smith had played them, but he

might wish that his principles would allow of some such ruse.

2

Captain Paul and Mr. Merton, both easy-going men with few home ties, settled down, after a time, cheerfully enough, to island life. They expected to be rescued before long; Captain Paul at first constantly scanned the horizon for a sail, but, as no sail appeared, he accepted its absence without much disappointment. Before the year was out, he had taken a handsome young woman to wife. Mr. Merton has married no one so far, but flirts with all the girls in turn, enjoys the various drinks very much, and has taught the island several more.

Charles, when he was well of his fever, at first moped and brooded a good deal, for, since Flora would not have him, and had, in fact, married another, he disliked the island and was very homesick. But, by degrees, he found his place. Hindley Smith-Rimski made friends with him, eager to learn all he could impart as to English literature. Charles had with him several books—two anthologies of modern verse, a Shelley, a book of critical essays, and another of short stories, besides many of his own poems in manuscript. These specimens of English literature were eagerly welcomed by young islanders, and, guided by Charles, a new school of island literature rose and developed. Charles was before long asked to accept the position of Professor of Literature, which he enjoyed. His own writings were acclaimed as he produced them (and many an old literary effort he was thus enabled to produce as new) with flattering admiration, and he came gradually to find as much pleasure in writing for this island public as for his public (nearly as small and much less

appreciative) in England. After all, it was provincial to think that one public was less important than another. Here he had the advantage of being unique, foremost, a leader, instead of merely one among many literary young men. If Charles ever returns to London, he will miss the pleasant atmosphere of adulation; he will feel chilled, lost in a crowd. It is not many young men who, at five-and-twenty, are Professors of Literature. Charles would not now be pleased if a ship should come.

Generously, he used his influence to make Peter Conolly's painting the fashion. Peter was enabled to give up dentistry and sell as many pictures as he could paint, and Flora became rich.

The island underwent—is now undergoing—an intellectual as well as a political renaissance. It is producing, for good or ill, a considerable body of indifferent literature and art. It also has a flourishing drama and stage. Learning in all branches has been extended and reinforced by the stock of it introduced by the Cambridge Thinkwells. William has been made Instructor of Science, and twentieth century views of the cosmos have supervened on the dying and despised Paleyology imparted by Miss Smith.

As to William, as to Rosamond, it is scarcely worth while referring to them; it will be obvious to any one who has followed this narrative that they are very happy on Orphan Island, and want no more of life. If William has occasional desires to increase his stock of knowledge at European sources, to keep up with whatever may be going on in the scientific world, these are counterbalanced by the greater freedom and peace of his present life.

And Rosamond still lives as in a dream come true. To make up for her abandoned dog—her chief and

only acute regret—she has adopted a small, affectionate monkey.

So the Thinkwells slipped into island life, and Cambridge, speculating from time to time curiously on their disappearance, knows them no more.

3

It is, of course, only a year since these events occurred. It is early yet. Early to predict the future, to foresee the manner of the development of this little community, so curiously increased last year by six souls. What changes will the new element in the end make? What will be the ultimate destiny of the island republic? Will it become, in a few years, as tyrannous, as unfair, as oligarchic in constitution and economic condition, as it was in the palmy days of the Smiths? Likely enough, since this is a way states have, under whatever government they may flourish. And will the ship watched for by old Jean come? A ship—an aeroplane—rescue in some form—who knows whether even now Orphan Island is not being thus visited? Or will another seventy years elapse before it is again heard of? Or will the islanders presently succeed in building crafts substantial enough to weather the Pacific and make (those who so desire) their own escape?

And, when the island shall be found again, how will it appear to its new finders? Will it seem, in its Thinkwellian, 1923 stage of knowledge, as strange, as backward, as outmoded in learning and outlook, as it did to those who broke into it after its first seventy years of segregated history?

A further question. If rescue should at any time present itself, how many will avail themselves of it? Will the Orphans, leaving their newly constituted

republic and their now more prosperous homes, lightly adventure in unknown lands? Will the Smiths wish to leave their island (even diminished among men as they now are) and go out into a world which knows them not for aristocrats fallen from power? Will the Thinkwells want to return to England, to Cambridge, to London? Will Captain Paul and Mr. Merton desert their easy-going life for labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar?

It is certain that Flora and Heathcliff and Peter, and many others of the young and adventurous, will take any opportunity they may get to see the world, as they call Great Britain. But it is by no means so certain that, should they ever see it, they would remain in it long. Why should they? It is cold; it rains; it has large towns; its vegetation is poor, its sea poorer. It has, in short, few advantages over Orphan Island, beyond mere novelty and size.

Unanswerable questions all of these, on which this tale must end. Across the future of Orphan Island, as across all futures, is hung a curtain of mist, on which is scrawled a question mark.

THE END

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